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THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES IN ANCIENT ROME

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Role of Physical Activities in Ancient Rome," submitted by Wayne H. Bishop in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to collate, and reproduce, in the form of photographs and illustrations, the archeological evidence relating to physical activities in ancient Rome. Using this information to support the literary record, a further aim was to determine the role that physical activities served in the lives of the Roman people.

Archeological sources relating to physical activities were numerous, and in some instances, were able to provide an insight into activities and techniques seldom, if ever, recorded by the ancient writers. In some cases archeological data provided information that was contrary to the literary accounts.

The following hypotheses were examined:

1. That public amusements provided by the imperial government were used as a political tool to direct the activities of the populace and to divert the minds of the subjects from political affairs.
2. That physical activities held a relevant position in the lives of Roman citizens, both rich and poor.

Both hypotheses were supported by considerable archeological and historical evidence.

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PREFACE

The more trivial our recreations the more accurately will they often reveal the qualities of the mind, as the lightest feather we can toss up will best determine the direction of the wind. If this be true of an individual it will be equally applicable to a nation, whose familiar and domestic characteristics we may much better ascertain from their sports, pastimes, and amusements, than from the more prominent and important features to which historians have usually restricted themselves in their delineations. Laws, institutions, empires pass away and are forgotten; but the diversions of a people being commonly interwoven with some immutable element of the general feeling, or perpetuated by circumstances of climate and locality, will frequently survive when every other national peculiarity has worn itself out and fallen into oblivion.¹

¹Smith, Horatio, Festivals Games and Amusements, (New York: Harper & Row, 1831), p. 13.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

All study of the past is based on the interpretations of the sources available - written or unwritten evidence - and making inferences and deductions from them. When combined with literary evidence, objects unearthed by archeological research provide the illustration required to gain an idea of the way in which the man of antiquity lived. In fact, using such a co-operative approach, the application of archeological techniques to historically documented societies can amplify the strictly literary record, and in many cases represents concrete and undeniable evidence.

On the other hand, archeology can fill gaps left in our reading, and histories, written on the basis of literary evidence alone, may need to be revised in the light of this constantly increasing body of knowledge¹. Eydoux² has argued that a study of the past by means of ancient manuscripts has almost reached its limits, and that archeology now has an important place in the reconstruction of history. Brion³ supports this idea, and further points out that it was not uncommon for ancient authors to neglect

¹Johnson, Mary, Roman Life, (Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1957), p. 19.

²Eydoux, Henri-Paul, The Buried Past, (New York: Frederick A. Praegar, 1966), p. xiii.

³Brion, Marcel, The World of Archeology, (London: Elek Books, 1967), p.11.

or conceal a number of features, either because they did not correspond with their literary purposes, or because they were assumed known to their contemporaries.

Often, the more common an article was, the less likely it was to be described in the ancient literature. At the Latin colony of Cosa, for instance, American excavations have uncovered many humble objects such as scale weights, counters for games, stili of bone for writing and kitchen utensils⁴. One would consider all of these items to be common and functional, but rarely, if ever, have they been mentioned by the ancient authors.

Archeological sources relating to life in ancient Rome are numerous. They include objects built, made, or used by Romans for any purpose, from great buildings to the supply of implements and utensils of everyday use. In painting, mosaic and sculpture, Roman art has further presented us with representations of objects and articles in daily use.

The Romans were great builders, and wherever they went, even into distant Britain, they left architectural remains, of which traces at least, are still in existence⁵. In Rome itself, such monumental structures as the Flavian Amphitheatre, the Arch of Constantine, and Trajan's Column, still bear testimony to the character of this ancient civilization.

⁴Johnson, op. cit., p. 19.

⁵Keyte, S.W., "Farthing Baths: Life in a Roman Public Bath", English Review, 44, (April, 1927), pp. 472-488.

Even more significant, in some respects, is the record brought to light through the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. According to Paoli⁶, our knowledge of many aspects of daily life in the Roman world would not be so precise, if the excavations of these ancient cities had not satisfied our curiosity with a wealth of information. The ruins of Pompeii, buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D., have shown us a middle-class Italian town, with paved streets and sidewalks, public buildings, houses whose decorations and furnishings have been preserved, and shops with supplies and equipment where businesses were carried on.

While the antiquities of these cities are not the antiquities of Rome itself, they do bear light on the more magnificent life of the capital. As Paoli⁸ points out:

All those who live in the same civilization which is dominated by the influence of one great city on its fashions and ideas, must eventually lead to a very similar daily life.

Further valuable information has been gained through the examination and interpretation of coins. Classification of coins has made a substantial contribution to Roman history, especially in the areas and periods where the literary evidence is scanty or untrustworthy, e.g. the

⁶Paoli, Ugo, E., Rome, Its People, Life and Customs, Trans. R.A. McNaughton, (London: Longmans Green & Co., 1963), p. 133.

⁷Johnson, op. cit., p. 16.

⁸Paoli, op. cit., p. 133.

middle years of the third century A.D.⁹. During the Roman Empire, coins provided the governments with the means of advertising their achievements and intentions. Often, the only official announcements that many people saw were those on coins, and successive imperial governments took immense care to inform their subjects of the ceremonial activities of the emperors' lives and particular efforts were made to show everyone their renowned characteristics¹⁰.

In spite of its many virtues, archeological evidence is not without its own peculiar limitations. The city of Rome, for instance, has been continuously inhabited down to today, and later generations have destroyed or concealed, a great deal of the evidence from earlier periods.

For the physical educator, further problems arise in the interpretation of archeological data. One is aware that the examination and interpretation of archeological evidence has rarely been performed by individuals with a background in physical education. As a result, in the interpretation of material relating to physical activities, some of the original intent may be lost. One should note, however, that similar problems arise in the translation and interpretation of the literary record.

In spite of these problems, especially the former, through the patient work of archeologists, the picture of ancient Rome is emerging with greater clarity. The many discoveries, some spectacular, some comparatively minor and unknown to the general public, have all added to our

⁹Jones, A.M.H., "Numismatics and History", in Carson, R.A.G., and C.H.V. Sutherland, (eds.), Essays on Roman Coinage, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 13.

¹⁰Grant, Michael, Roman History From Coins, (Cambridge: University Press, 1958), p. 24.

knowledge of the past. Above all, the incessant analysis of archeological data has led to a constant re-thinking and has filled historians with the hope of gradually reaching the truth¹¹.

The Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to collate, and reproduce, in the form of photographs and sketches, the archeological evidence relating to physical activities in ancient Rome. Using this evidence to support the literary record, a further aim was to determine the role that physical activities played in the lives of Roman citizens, particularly during the years 300 B.C. - 300 A.D.

Definition of Terms

Physical Activities: When applying this term to ancient Rome, all aspects of sport, recreation and physical exercise were included. Perhaps its best expression was in the Roman word ludi, which in its broadest sense referred to amusements or entertainments, but when further broken down referred to formal sports such as the games of the circus and arena; informal sports such as individual games, pastimes and recreation activities; and schools of instruction such as those on the Campus Martius, and gladiatorial schools, where one exercised for military or occupational purposes¹².

The city of Rome holds a unique position in the history of the ancient world. In the space of ten centuries,¹³ expansion gradually trans-

¹¹Grimal, Pierre. In Search of Ancient Italy, (New York: Hill & Wang, 1964), p. 69.

¹²Carey, M., et.al.(eds.), The Oxford Classical Dictionary, (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1949), p. 578.

¹³The traditional date for the founding of Rome was 753 B.C.

formed this city from a collection of prehistoric villages on the Palatine, to a luxurious imperial metropolis, a cosmopolitan centre of world trade, finance and high society.¹⁴ In the six centuries after 300 B.C., Rome expanded from a city-state to the capital of a world empire, extending from Scotland to the Sahara Desert, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Caspian Sea. At its peak it controlled an estimated population of one hundred million people.¹⁵

For the physical educator, a significant by-product of this expansion was the increased amount of leisure time that became available to the citizens of Rome, both rich and poor.

War and expansion had totally transformed the economic and social basis of society, resulting in extremes of wealth and poverty.¹⁶ Unemployment became a perennial problem as the growth of the empire brought to Rome large numbers of penniless immigrants, homeless Italians and, above all, slaves and freedmen of every nationality. This army of poor unemployed formed a wretched and idle mob, estimated by Carcopino¹⁷ to be one hundred and fifty thousand by the second century A.D.

To these idle thousands can be added an equal number, who pursued a regular occupation or trade, but who had finished work by the hour of

¹⁴Trever, Albert A., A History of Ancient Civilization, Vol. II, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1939), p.6.

¹⁵Hardy, W.G. The Greek and Roman World, (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart Ltd., 1962), p. 73.

¹⁶Trever, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁷Carcopino, Jerome, Daily Life in Ancient Rome, (Middlesex: Penguin Books Limited, 1964), p. 231.

noon.¹⁸ Illustrating this factor, McIntosh¹⁹ points out that although the Roman worker stopped at the sixth hour in summer, and the seventh in winter, his working day was never more than seven hours long. In fact, slaves have been reported off duty, and on their way to the baths as early as the fifth hour.²⁰ Under these conditions, the working class of Rome still had the greater part of the afternoon to amuse themselves.

As the empire continued to expand, the growth of this idle proletariat created pressing problems to both the wealthier citizens and the government. High-minded statesmen such as Cato the younger, as well as more opportunistic politicians, felt that the only sound and safe policy was to keep the populace quiet, by entertaining them and subsidizing their food supply.²¹

The government paid for its maintenance by great distributions of corn and, by the second century A.D., the number of those receiving public assistance, together with their dependent families, represented a total of between four hundred thousand, and seven hundred thousand people.²²

In an endeavour to occupy and discipline the leisure hours of these idle thousands, lavish spectacles and public amusements were provided. Such spectacles comprised chariot racing, gladiatorial shows, beast-fighting, exhibitions of trained animals, athletic contests and dramatic presentations.²³

¹⁸Carcopino, ibid, p. 231.

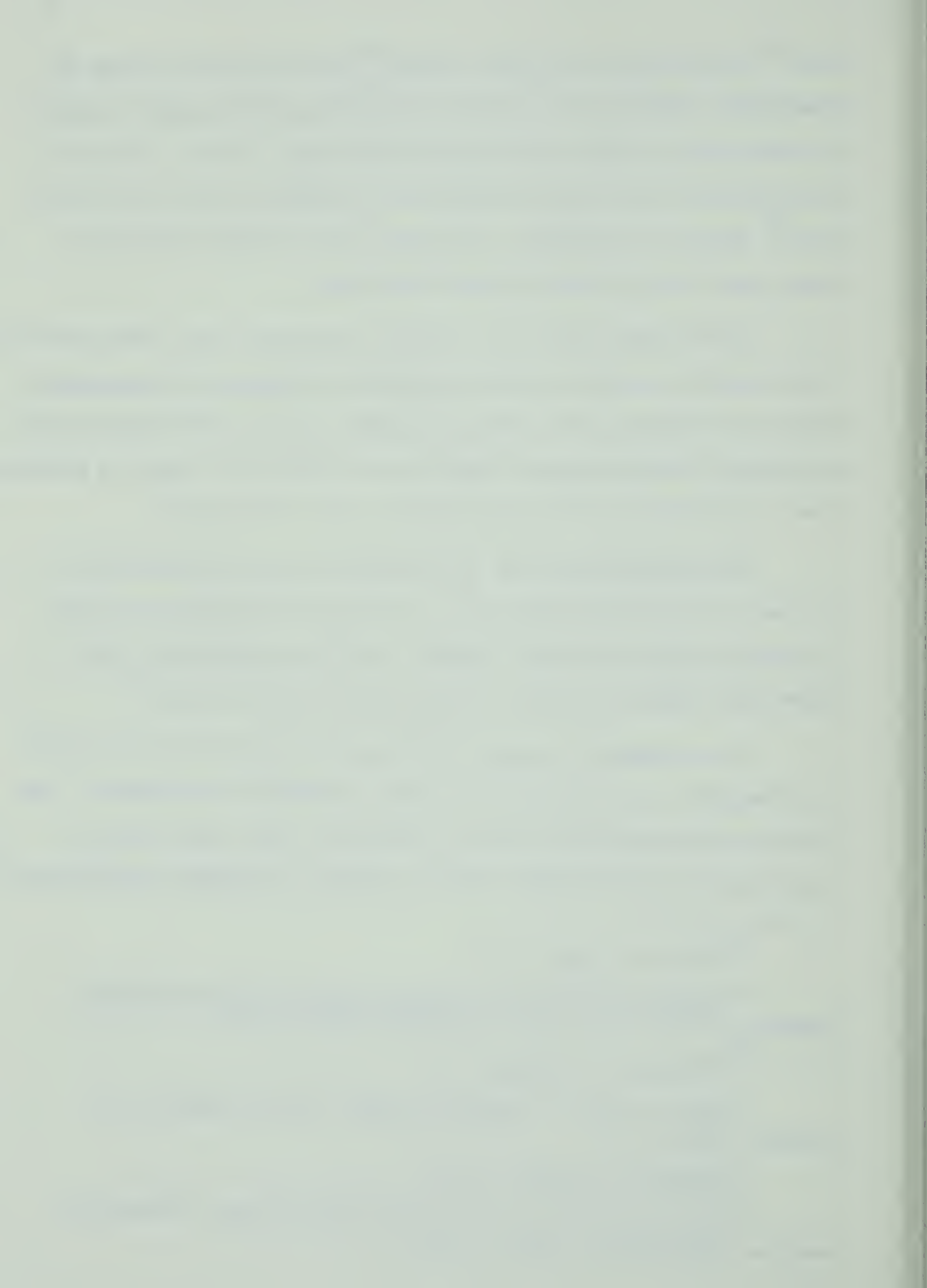
¹⁹McIntosh, P.C., et.al., Landmarks in the History of Physical Education, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), p. 41.

²⁰McIntosh, P.C., ibid, p. 41.

²¹Grant, Michael. The World of Rome, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960), p. 12

²²McIntosh, op. cit., p. 38.

²³Pellison, Maurice. Roman Life in Pliny's Time, (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Co., 1897), p. 186.



These games provided imperial governments with a necessary diversion. Writing on the subject Grant²⁴ states:

The feeling was that the rank and file, indeed the bulk of Roman citizenry must be kept out of politics - for which, except in its lowest forms, they were not regarded as suitable - and that this could be ensured if their standard of living was raised (by subsidization) and if they were kept amused.

At first, there appeared to be no deliberate policy behind this, and games of the early Republic were merely extensions of religious festivals held in honour of the gods. However, by the close of the Republic, the games were no longer religious in character, and in the hands of the party chiefs had become simply an instrument for acquiring public favour. Caesar, for instance, through sponsoring public games, was 1300 talents in debt before he had held any public office at all.²⁵

By the time of the Empire the sponsorship of public amusements formed part of the political system, and was continued on an ever-increasing and more lavish scale. The games afforded the emperors an opportunity of coming into personal contact and ingratiating themselves with the assembled people. The more they aimed at popularity, the more frequently they attended their own, and others' spectacles.²⁶ Even Tiberius, who disliked these diversions, was often present at the games at the beginning of his reign, partly to do the entertainers honour, but, more important, to keep the populace in order by demonstrating his sympathy with their pleasure.²⁷

²⁴Grant, op. cit., p. 86.

²⁵Woody, Thomas. Life and Education in Early Societies, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 724.

²⁶Friedlander, Ludwig. Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire, Vol. 2, (New York: Barnes and Noble Inc., 1965), p. 4.

²⁷Ibid, p.4.

A further importance has been attached to the games under the Empire as they were a substitute, to a large extent, for the place that public assemblies previously held under the Republic²⁸. These games, which had taken the place of the speeches given in the public square by orators and statesmen of the past, owed their success in part to the fact that they contained some elements of the passion and storm that had belonged to the ancient forum²⁹. Writing on this subject Inge³⁰ points out:

At a time when literature was gagged, when political meetings and secret societies were alike suppressed, when even private speech was silenced by fear of the delator, there still remained the "licence" of the circus and amphitheatre which enabled the Roman people to make its will known and often to wrest compliance from a reluctant emperor.

The shouts of the assembled thousands, carefully organized beforehand, on several occasions led to the revocation of a popular edict, or the amnesty of a criminal condemned to the wild beasts³¹. Further, not only could popular grievances be aired, but gibes could be freely directed, either at private individuals or even at the emperors themselves. Individual complaints were hard to detect, while the multitude were emboldened by the security of numbers³².

But if the spectacles were a political necessity, they served a far more important role as the amusement of an idle population. How much

²⁸Inge, William R., Society in Rome Under the Caesars, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 206-7.

²⁹Pellison, op. cit., p. 187.

³⁰Inge, op. cit., p. 207.

³¹Friedlander, op. cit., p. 5.

³²Ibid., p. 6.

space they filled in the life of the metropolis may be estimated when one enumerates the increasing number of days on which they were given. At the beginning of the first century, B.C., such public holidays had taken place on fifty-nine days a year; they had doubled in number by the second century A.D. and, in the third century, occupied no less than a hundred and seventy five days.³³ These numbers, however, only represent regular festival days. There were also extraordinary games, which occurred very frequently, and were sometimes prolonged an inordinate length of time. In 80 A.D., for example, the opening of the Colosseum was celebrated by games for a hundred days in succession, and Trajan, in 106 A.D., celebrated the conquest of Dacia with a celebration that lasted one hundred and twenty-three days.³⁴ In analyzing these statistics, Carcopino³⁵ has concluded that Rome, by the first century A.D., enjoyed at least one day of holiday for every working day.

The following hypotheses were examined in this study: first, that public amusements provided by the imperial government were used as a political tool to direct the activities of the populace and, to divert the minds of the subjects from political affairs; and second, that physical activities held a relevant position in the lives of Roman citizens, both rich and poor.

³³Grose-Hodge, Humfrey. Roman Panorama, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), p. 222.

³⁴Hardy, op. cit., p. 96.

³⁵Carcopino, op. cit., p. 227

CHAPTER II

THE CIRCUS AND CHARIOT RACING

Entertainments in ancient Rome were closely associated with the buildings in which they were held. The most ancient, the longest in terms of continuity, and the most popular of the public amusements were the chariot races, which took place in an elongated space, curved at one end and straight at the other, called the circus¹.

The evidence with respect to the archeological remains of the various circi built in and around Rome is limited. The descriptions and allusions of the ancient writers however, enables us to form fairly accurate conceptions of these buildings, and the chariot races themselves are well represented in the various works of art, especially sarcophagi and mosaics, from which many details can be gathered².

The oldest and largest of all known circi was the Circus Maximus, which for a long time was the only building of its kind and appears to be a model from which later circi were copied³. This structure was gradually built up over the centuries in the depression of the Vallis Murcia, a long valley between the Aventine and Palatine hills, and appears from a very early

¹Showerman, Grant, Rome and the Romans, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 320.

²Jones, H. Stuart, Companion To Roman History, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 134.

³Peck, Harry, T. (ed.), Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities, (New York: American Book Co.), p. 350.

period to have been reserved as a place for races and other public spectacles.⁴ The long, level bottom and sloping sides of the Vallis Murcia made it a naturally convenient place for races to be held and seen by a crowd of spectators, who probably stood or sat on the grassy slopes of the two hills long before any architectural structure was erected.

The track, six hundred metres long and a hundred and fifty metres wide, was originally formed by the low ground of the valley, and its soft, swampy surface eased the competitors' falls.⁶ In the centre of the field itself, two wooden posts (metae) were staked, the more westerly one being placed in front of a trench sheltering the subterranean altar of the god Consus. This altar was only uncovered during the games,⁷ and of the three festivals held in honour of this Italic deity, the principal one, the Consualia, was accompanied by horse and chariot races. It was at such a festival, in the time of Romulus, that the legendary rape of the Sabine women took place.⁸

Tradition has ascribed the beginnings of the Circus Maximus to the regal period and, in particular, to the reign of Tarquinius Priscus. According to Livy⁹, Priscus assigned definite areas to senators and knights

⁴Middleton, J. Henry. Ancient Rome in 1885, (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1885), p. 282.

⁵Peck, loc. cit.

⁶Carpino, op. cit.,

⁷Ibid.

⁸Livy, i.9.13., B.O. Foster. (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1952).

⁹Ibid, i.35.8.

from which to view the games. In these areas, wooden seats were erected, which were raised on props to a height of twelve feet above the ground. The seats were probably only temporary structures for there is no indication of anything permanent until 329 B.C. when Livy¹⁰ reports that chariot stalls (carceres) were installed. These carceres were probably also made of wood and a century later it was reported that they were painted¹¹.

After the carceres, the next permanent part of the circus to be constructed was the spina¹², a long, low wall which joined the metae and divided the course longitudinally. The spina was not built parallel to the sides of the circus, but was inclined a little out of the central axis, so that there was more room at the start at which place the chariots were all crowded together¹³. The Romans at first broke up the monotony of this longitudinal embankment, with statues of divinities that supposedly looked with favour on competitive sports such as Pollentia, the Goddess of might¹⁴.

The censors of 174 B.C. restored various parts of the circus including the carceres and for the benefit of the spectators set up the ova - sets of seven large wooden eggs which were used to record the number of laps completed¹⁵. In spite of these improvements and innovations, it was

¹⁰Ibid, viii, 20.

¹¹Platner, S.B. A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome, rev. Thomas Ashby, (London: Humphrey Milford, 1929), p. 114.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Middleton, op. cit., p. 284.

¹⁴Carcopino, loc. cit.

¹⁵Platner and Ashby, loc. cit.

not until the last century B.C., and the first century A.D., that the Circus was honoured with the magnificent monuments which made it famous.

For the protection of the public at the dedication of the temple of Venus Victrix, in 55 B.C., Pompey erected iron barriers around the arena, where twenty elephants were pitted against armed Gaetulains.¹⁶ To the terror of the spectators, the barriers proved to be inadequate, with iron bars buckling under the impact of these terrified monsters.¹⁷ In order to avoid a similar panic in the future, Caesar, in 46 B.C., enlarged the arena to the east and west; and constructed a moat (euripas) between the arena and the seats (cavae).¹⁸ At the same time he had the carceres rebuilt in volcanic tufa stone, and carved out the face of the hillsides in order to comfortably accommodate the spectators in tiers of seats.¹⁹

Due to a fire in 31 B.C., it is difficult to assess just how extensive the construction, and use of the Circus had become before the Augustan period. Although Pliny²⁰ speaks of the Circus Maximus as "built by Caesar the dictator", it is more probable that Augustus restored it after the fire; set up on the spina a large obelisk from Heliopolis in 10 B.C.,²¹ and who erected the imperial box²² (pulvinar), really gave the

¹⁶Pliny, Natural History, viii.20., trans. H. Rackham (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1912).

¹⁷Carcopino, op. cit., p. 235.

¹⁸Pliny, loc. cit.

¹⁹Carcopino, loc. cit.

²⁰Pliny, loc. cit., xxxvi, 102.

²¹loc. cit., xxxvi, 71.

²²loc. cit., xxxvi, 102.

building its permanent form. In any case, definite information about the Circus, whether primarily due to Caesar or Augustus, begins with the Augustan period and subsequent changes probably did not materially effect the general plan. According to Dionysius²³ of Halicarnassus, the Circus, in 7 B.C., must have already been one of the most extensive and elaborate structures in ancient Rome:

For the Circus is three stades and a half in length and four plethra in breadth.²⁴ Round about it on the two longer sides and one of the shorter sides a canal has been dug, ten feet in depth and width, to receive water. Behind the canal are erected porticoes three stories high, of which the lowest story has stone seats, gradually rising, as in the theatres, one above the other, and the two upper stories wooden seats. The two longer porticoes are united into one and joined together by means of the shorter one, which is crescent shaped, so that all three form a single porticoe like an amphitheatre, eight stades in circuit, and capable of holding 150,000 persons. The other of the shorter sides is left uncovered and contains vaulted starting places for the horses, which are all opened by means of a single rope. On the outside of the Circus there is another porticoe of one story which has shops in it and ascends for the spectators at every shop, so that the countless thousands of people may enter and depart without inconvenience.

In 36 A.D. another fire destroyed the upper tiers of seats on the Aventine side.²⁵ Following the ensuing destruction, a great part of the structure was soon restored and enlarged by the emperor Claudius who

²³Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities*, iii.68, Trans. Ernest Cary (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1940).

²⁴621 metres long and 118 metres wide.

²⁵Tacitus, *The Annals*, vi. 45., Trans. John Jackson, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1937).

rebuilt in whole marble the carceres and replaced the old wooden metae by new ones of gilt bronze.²⁶ Nero removed the euripas to make room for additional seats for equits, and offered further protection to the spectators by installing a continuous round bar of wood covered with ivory which revolved and prevented the wild beasts escaping from the arena.²⁷

In 64 A.D. the great fire of Nero swept the whole length of the Circus and severely damaged parts of the Palatine side.²⁸ Nero evidently restored the damaged sections, for it was in use in 68 A.D. when he returned from Greece and passed through it in triumphal procession.²⁹ In the reign of Domitian, the marble seats were carried higher, greatly diminishing the danger of fire. The upper tiers, however, were still made of wood and appear to have existed on top of the cavae for several centuries after his reign.³⁰

Additional splendour was given to the Circus by the emperor Trajan who increased its seating capacity by adding two stadia to the length of the cavea.³¹ By this time the Circus had reached the colossal dimensions of six hundred by two hundred metres, had attained its final

²⁶Suentonius, The Lives of the Caesars, Caligula. Trans. J. Rolfe, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Limited, 1951).

²⁷Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p.116

²⁸Tacitus, op.cit., xv.38.

²⁹Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 117

³⁰Peck, op. cit., p. 351.

³¹Dio Cassius. Roman History. Trans. E-Cary, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Limited, 1917).

imposing form and, according to Platner and Ashby,³² must have been among the most magnificent structures in the Roman world. The whole *cavae* with its tiers of seats, the *carceres*, the emperor's *pulvinar* and the central *spina* were then of gleaming white marble, decorated with gold and colours, studded with jewel-like mosaics, and adorned with long lines of columns made of richly-tinted Oriental marbles and rows of large statues in marble and gilt bronze, together with costly metal screens and richly sculptured thrones for officials of rank.³³

Later emperors did add something in the way of restoration and decoration, but added little or nothing to the Circus' splendour. Constantine, for example, provided further facilities for accommodation, and his son Constantius adorned the *spina* with a second obelisk from Thebes. After his final enlargement, the Circus held, according to the *Notia*, the almost incredible number of 385,000 people.^{34,35}

In spite of its enormous size, very little now remains of the Circus Maximus. Excavations in recent years have unearthed parts of the sub-structure, and these, together with representations on works of art,³⁶ enable us to form a fairly accurate notion of its plan, construction and the activities that were held there.³⁷ Additional assistance is provided by

³²loc. cit.

³³Peck, loc. cit. p. 351

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵The seating capacity of the circus has given rise to much discussion and although estimates vary from a maximum of 385,000 to a minimum of 140,000, no certainty has been reached. Platner and Ashby, p. 119.

³⁶These include drawings made in the sixteenth century when a considerable portion of the Circus was still very complete.

³⁷Peck, loc. cit.

the well-preserved remains of the Circus of Maxentius (Figs. 1 and 2).

At the peak of its splendour, the exterior of the Circus has three stories, with arches and engaged columns, all covered with marble. The *cavae* was divided into three bands of seats, and separated by horizontal corridors.³⁸ In addition to the *cavae* proper, various state boxes of marble were constructed; one series of these was over the *carceres* and appeared to have been occupied by the giver of the games.³⁹ Another box was placed at one side for officials, who decided which chariot crossed the finishing line first.⁴⁰ The third century relief from Foligno (Fig. 3) clearly illustrates the presiding magistrate sitting in his box above the *carceres*. This scene is also represented on a relief from the Vatican Museum (Fig. 4) and shows the presiding magistrate, seated with colleagues in his box over the *carceres*, about to present a prize to the winning charioteer, who has driven up and is saluting him from below.

The *carceres* were situated at the west end of the Circus, and consisted of small vaulted chambers, each large enough for one chariot and its horses. These chambers, twelve in number, each had two doors, one behind, by which the chariot entered, and one in front opening into the arena.⁴¹ The latter doorway was closed either by a rope or folding barriers. The front doors were thrown open at the start by slaves, two of whom were at each doorway and who flung them open simultaneously on a given signal.

³⁸Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 118-119.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Peck, op. cit., p. 352.

⁴¹Peck, loc. cit.

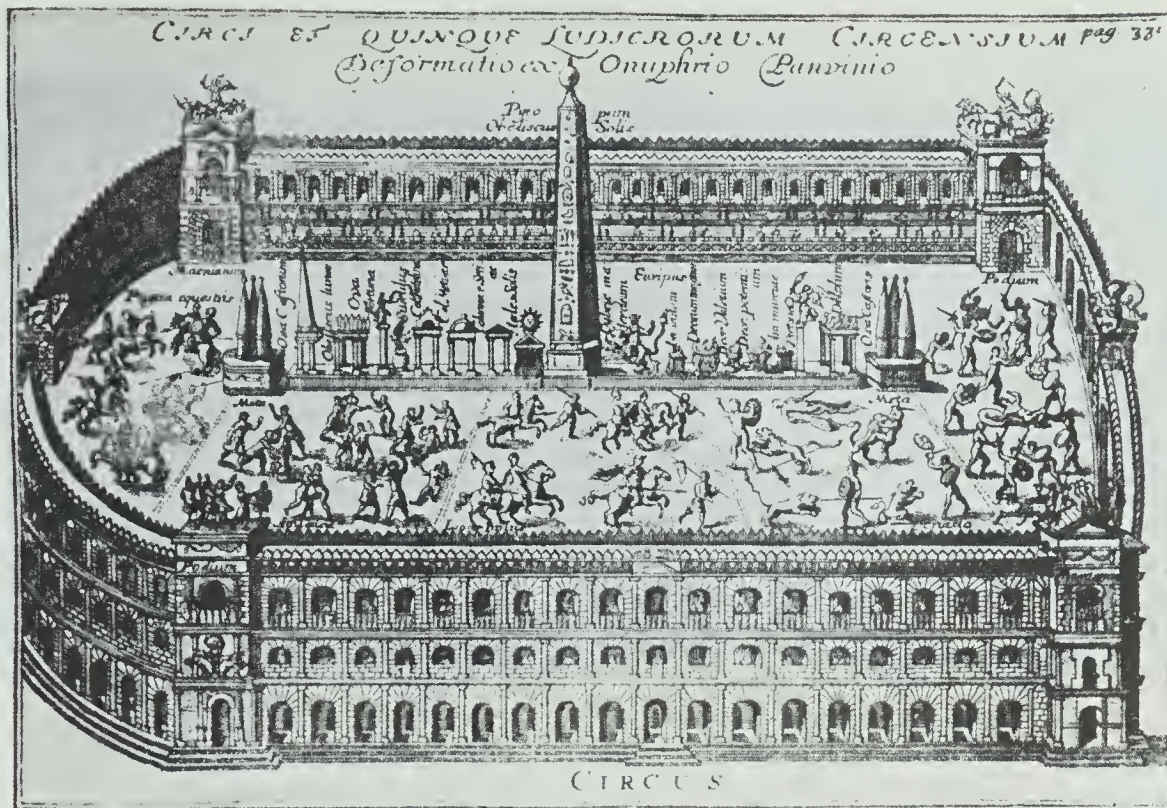


Figure 1: A sixteenth century illustration of the Circus Maximus showing various forms of combat. The spina with its various ornaments is clearly shown.



Figure 2: Air photograph of the remains of the Circus Maxentius.

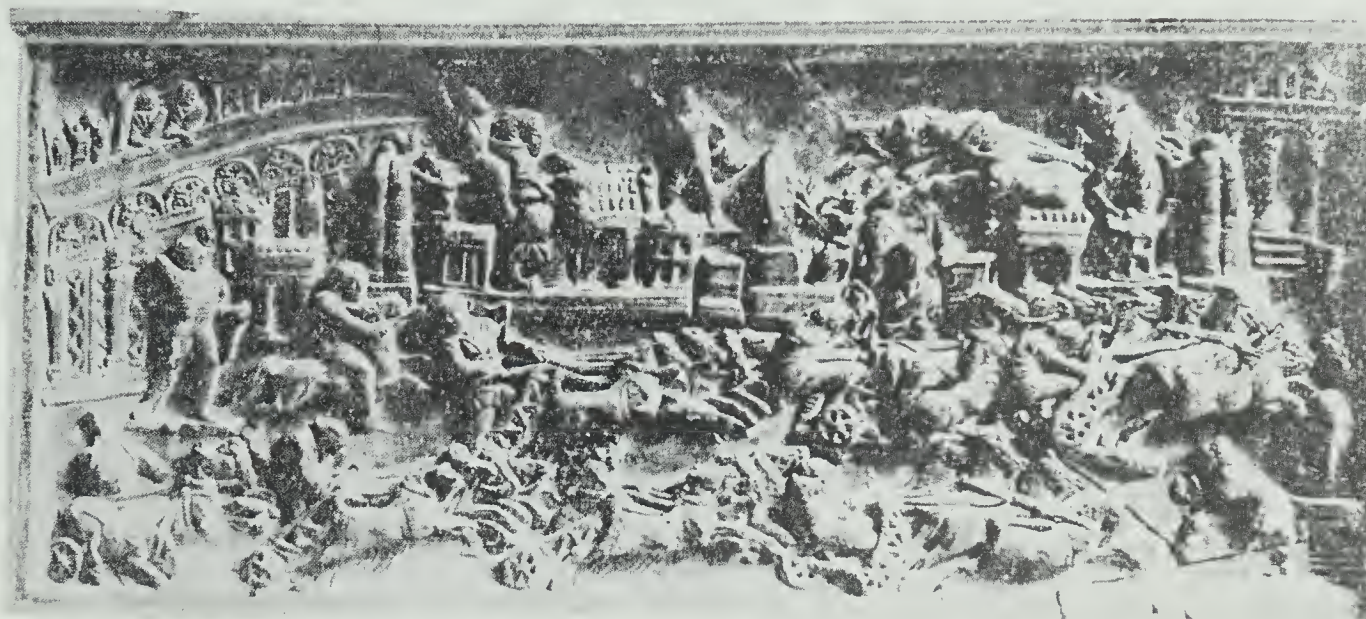


Figure 3: Relief from Foligno depicting a chariot race in the Circus Maximus.



Figure 4: Sarcophagus relief from the Vatican Museum showing a charioteer about to receive the victory prize from a presiding magistrate.

In the earlier period the races appear to have begun at the carceres, but later the actual start took place at a line marked on the arena with white chalk or lime.⁴² From the plan of the Circus of Maxentius⁴³ (Fig. 6), one can see that the carceres were set on a curve, the centre of which was calculated from a point midway between the line of the spina and the side of the cavae. This plan was adopted so that each chariot would have had a position of equal advantage at the start.⁴⁴ A lamp from the British Museum (Fig. 5) gives an excellent representation of the front doors of these starting stalls.

The spina was the long, low platform of marble, set in the middle of the arena to separate the going and returning course of the racers. Various mosaics, coins and reliefs⁴⁵ show the spina with its series of statues and ornamental structures such as obelisks, columns, altars and fountains. In addition to these, the sets of seven marble eggs and dolphins are shown, mounted on a small aedicula, to which access was given by a ladder. On the relief from Foligno (Fig. 3) the details of the spina are given with great minuteness. At the ends are the three conical metae,⁴⁶ in the centre the obelisk, and to the left of the obelisk is the row of dolphins, mounted on a small aedicula. They are approached by a ladder, near which stands a slave, whose duty it was to turn one of the dolphins round at each lap. To the right of the obelisk and the statue of Cybele is a row of seven eggs mounted on pillars, a second set stands near the other meta.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³The Circus of Maxentius appears to be a replica of the Circus Max.

⁴⁴Middleton, op. cit., p. 284.

⁴⁵See Figs. 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

⁴⁶An excellent representation of the metae can also be seen in the relief from the British Museum. Fig. 11.

An unusual spina is represented in the Lyons mosaic, (Fig. 8) from the third century A.D. Instead of a long, narrow wall, the spina consisted of huge tanks of water. In the tanks the eggs and dolphins are erected on lofty stands (ovaria). The dolphins have been converted into fountains, and spurt water below. In addition, the obelisk in the centre, the winning line running from it, and the metae at the ends are clearly shown. On the left are the carceres, four on either side of the principal entrance. The box of the presiding magistrate is also shown above the entrance.

Besides the Circus Maximus, Rome possessed the Circus Flaminius built in 221 B.C., apparently for the celebration of the ludi plebii. Its site was on the Campus Martius, where considerable remains were to be seen as late as the sixteenth century A.D.⁴⁷ In the Horti Agrippinae (the gardens of the elder Agrippina) was the Circus Gai Neronius⁴⁸, named after Caligula and Nero, the emperors responsible for its construction and use. On the spina was erected an obelisk which stands today in the Piazza of St. Peter's at Rome.⁴⁹

There seem to have been no other circi in Rome itself, but in the immediate neighbourhood there were three others - that of the Arval Brothers on the Via Portuensis, the Circus of Maxentius⁵⁰ on the Via Appia, built in 309 A.D. and the third twelve miles from the city at Bovillae⁵¹ making six circi within easy reach of the people of Rome.

⁴⁷ Jones, op. cit., p. 138.

⁴⁸ Also termed Circus Vaticanus.

⁴⁹ Jones, Ibid.

⁵⁰ Macdonald, W., "The Plan and Construction of the Circus of Maxentius", Americal Journal of Archeology, vol. 62 (April, 1968), p. 224.

⁵¹ Johnson, op. cit., p. 254.



Figure 5: Roman oil lamp depicting a chariot race in the Circus. The carceres, with folding doors are shown on the left; to the right a stand with spectators.

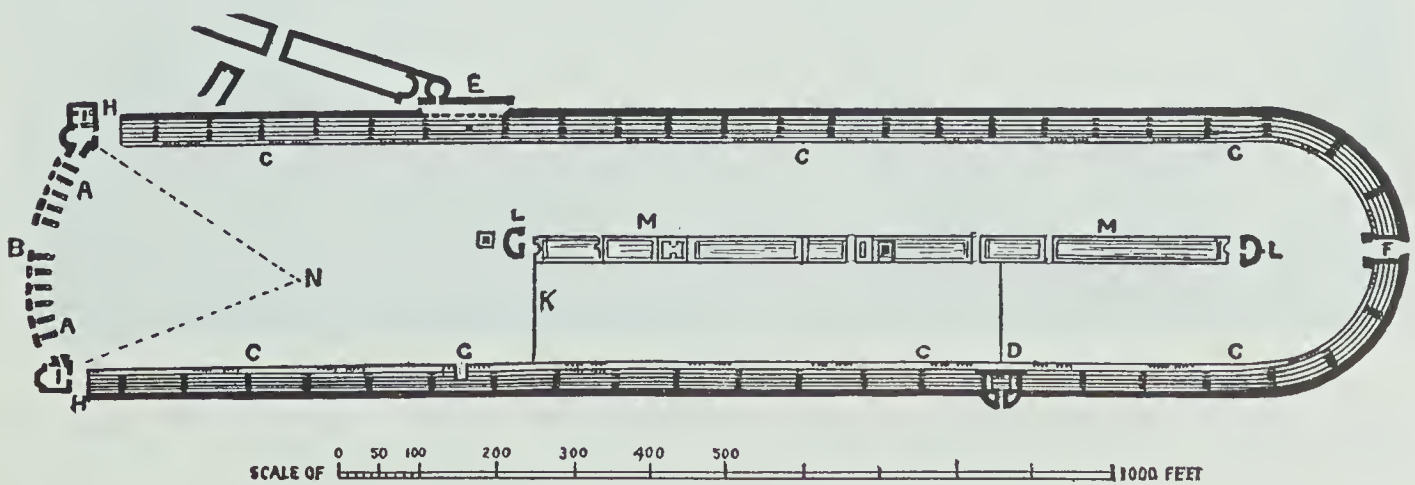


Figure 6: Plan of the Circus Maxentius. A. Carceres; B. Porta Pompae entrance in centre of carceres; C. seats for spectators; E. Pulvinar; K. Alba Linea; L. Metae; M. Spina.



Figure 7: Mosaic from Barcelona, Spain, illustrating a chariot race in the Circus. The spina, with metae, ova and dolphins are clearly represented.

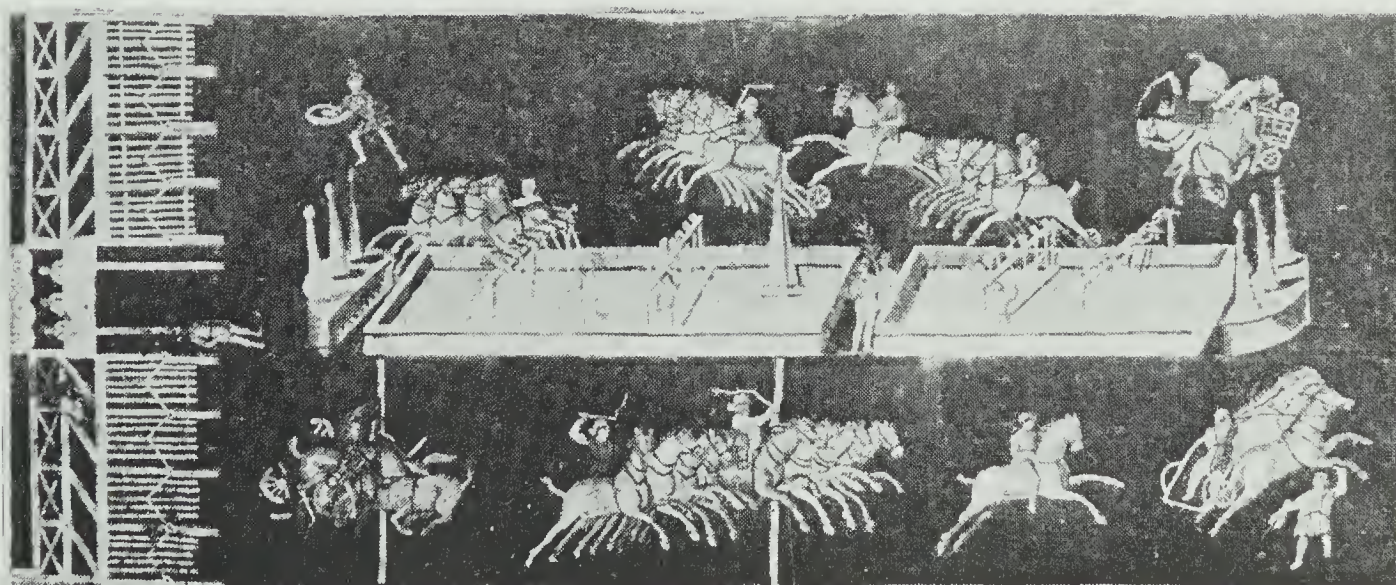


Figure 8: A canal filled with water forms the spina in this mosaic from Lyons, France. On the left, the imperial box is shown above wooden carceres.

While chariot racing was unquestionably the most important attraction of the circus, certain other equestrian events were included. There were, for example, races on horseback that were heightened by all sorts of acrobatic tricks. The desultores, or jockeys, would guide two horses at once, leap from one to the other and pick up prizes from the ground while in full gallop.⁵² There were also trained horses that performed tricks while standing on a wheeled platform which gave a very unstable footing.⁵³ Another notable event was the game of Troy, where boys of noble descent would parade before the spectators and perform a series of cavalry exercises in full armour.⁵⁴ Throughout the Republic, the Circus was also used for gladiatorial combats and fights with wild beasts (Fig. 16). However, with the building of amphitheatres, this form of entertainment was largely, although not entirely, removed.

Although popular, these auxiliary games never ranked as high as the chariot races for which the masses felt an absorbing interest. Many factors undoubtedly encouraged this devotion to the Circus, and it may be assumed that the sporting spirit itself was insufficient to account for these passions. One of the more significant influences on the popularity of chariot racing was the lead taken by the omnipotent heads of state. Nero talked constantly of horses and chariots from his earliest years, appeared as a charioteer in public, and decorated famous horses that had passed their prime, with gifts of money for their feed.⁵⁶ At the Olympic games he was

⁵²Carcopino, op. cit., p. 237.

⁵³Johnson, op. cit., p. 280.

⁵⁴Friedlander, Ludwig, op. cit., p. 28.

⁵⁵Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵⁶Dio, op. cit., Ixi.14.

supposed to have driven a ten-horse team, and in spite of a fall from his chariot, was awarded the victory crown.⁵⁷ Caligula was such a devoted partisan that he often feasted and slept in the stables of the horses. Vitellius acted as a groom for the Blue faction;⁵⁹ Domitian enthusiastically added two new factions,⁶⁰ and Verus, a colleague of Marcus Aurelius and partisan to the Green faction, had a special tomb built for one of its more famous horses, the "Flyer."⁶¹

Another important factor in fostering interest and one which brought forward in a conspicuous manner the political feelings of the spectators, was the devotion to racing factions. These factions, originally formed to accommodate the cost of the games were, according to Friedlander,⁶² among the most remarkable phenomena of the Empire. As the magnificence of the games constantly increased, it became impossible for the donors to meet the tremendous expense that was involved. Companies were then formed of capitalists and owners of slaves and stud-farms, to sponsor the running of the games. As there were usually four chariots in the racing competitions, so there were four companies, or factions, each distinguished by the colour of its chariot and the tunic of its driver. Hence we had the four factions represented by the colours white, red, blue and green.⁶³

⁵⁷Suetonius, Nero,²⁴ op. cit.

⁵⁸Dio, loc. cit.

⁵⁹Friedlander, op. cit., p. 30

⁶⁰Dio, op. cit., lxvii.4.

⁶¹Capitolinus; Verus, 6, as cited in Woody, T., loc. cit.

⁶²Friedlander, op. cit., p. 28.

⁶³Pellison, op. cit., p. 197.

Each faction maintained a great number of employees, consisting partly of slaves, partly of paid freedmen and including a staff of stable boys, grooms and trainers, veterinary surgeons, saddlers, dressers and water-ers, who accompanied the horses to the carceres.⁶⁴ The stables of all four factions were at the base of the Capital near the Circus Flaminius, and were partly built by the Emperors.⁶⁵ As for the drivers, the various factions vied with each other to secure the best at whatever cost. As a general rule, the chariot drivers did not remain with the same faction. Diocles, for instance, joined the Red faction only after trying the three others and in fact, of all the charioteers known through inscriptions, only one, Scirtus, served a single faction (the white) throughout his racing career.⁶⁶

While the origins of the colours are mystical, it is known that the inter-faction rivalry which became so famous during the Empire, was only just beginning in Cicero's time.⁶⁷ It was undoubtedly in the course of the first century, partly as a consequence of the infatuation of Caligula, Nero and Vitellius, that the system evolved. White and Red appear to be the original parties, with Green and Blue being introduced early in the Empire; Domitian added two more colours, Gold and Purple, but these did not appear to last long after his reign.⁶⁸

These factions undoubtedly had political significance, and the whole population from the Emperors to the proletariat and slaves were

⁶⁴Carcopino, op. cit., p. 283.

⁶⁵Friedlander, op. cit., p. 17.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 22.

⁶⁷Fowler, W.W., Social Life in Rome at the Age of Cicero. (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1963), p. 301.

⁶⁸Friedlander, loc.cit., p. 28.

divided into four hostile camps. This division of popular passion was useful to the government in a period of political sterility, and was undoubtedly given stimulus by the Emperors of the first century. It is possible that each colour was adopted by a social class. The masses, for instance, were devoted to the Green faction, and it is probably more than coincidence that the more democratic emperors such as Caligula and Nero favoured the Greens. So devoted was Caligula to the Green faction that he:

..... often dined and passed the night in their stables. At a banquet he gave the driver Eutychus two million sesterces as a table gift. Lest the sleep of his horse 'Headlong' should be disturbed the night before the games, he used to send soldiers to order silence in the neighbourhood. He gave the horse, besides purple trappings and a collar studded with gems, a stable in marble with an ivory manger: and furthermore a house with furniture and a staff of servants, so that those who were invited in the animal's name might be received with more splendour. They say, too,⁷⁰ that he intended to make his horse a consul.

As Emperor, Nero did more than merely favour the Greens actively; he wore Green in the Circus, and had the Circus strewn with green copper dust instead of sand.⁷¹ On the other hand, the Senate and the conservative authority appeared to identify themselves with the Blues, and the Emperor Vitellius went to the extent of condemning to death partisans of the Green who had spoken ill of the Blues.⁷²

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Suetonius, Caligula, 55, op. cit.

⁷¹ Friedlander, op. cit., p. 30.

⁷² Suetonius, Vitellius, 7, op. cit.

The actual colours were more important to the spectators than the horses and charioteers. Writing on this subject Pliny the Younger⁷³ states:

I am the more astonished that so many + thousands of grown men should be possessed again and again with a childish passion to look at galloping horses, and men standing upright in their chariots. If, indeed, they were attracted by the swiftness of the horses or the skill of the men, one could account for this enthusiasm. But in fact it is a bit of cloth they favour, a bit of cloth that captivates them. And if during the running the racers were to exchange colours, their partisans would change sides, and instantly forsake the very drivers and horses whom they were clamourously saluting by name.

Pliny the Elder⁷⁴ tells of one Caecina of Volaterrae, a man of equestrian rank, who was so devoted to the red faction that he would bring pigeons smeared in his favourite colour to the Circus and at the completion of a race let them loose to fly home and bear the news of victory. Green must have been the dominant colour, for in the words of Juvenal:⁷⁵

A roar (from the Circus) strikes upon my ear which tells me the Green has won; for had it lost, Rome would be as sad and dismayed as when the Consuls were vanquished in the dust of Cannae.

As the size of the circus increased and its equipment was perfected, the series of contests became extended and enriched. It seemed that almost every Emperor enlarged the program, and games lasting one day gave way to

⁷³Pliny the Younger, Letters, ix.6. Trans. W. Melmoth. Rev. W.M. Hutchinson, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1965).

⁷⁴Pliny, Natural History, x.71. op. cit.

⁷⁵Juvenal, Satires, xi. Trans. G. Ramsay, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1930).

those of seven, nine and even fifteen days.⁷⁶ Each race consisted of seven laps, and the number of races held in one day was increased in the early Empire. Under Augustus, it was customary to have ten or twelve races a day⁷⁷. In 37 A.D., at the inauguration of the Temple of Augustus, Caligula had twenty races on the first day, and twenty-four on the second. In order to accommodate this number it became necessary for the games to last from the morning to the evening. This undoubtedly pleased the spectators, for twenty-four races became the customary number after that date.⁷⁸ More than twenty-four were given only on extraordinary occasions. Domitian, for example, gave one hundred races at the ludi seculares, but in order to fit them in, it was necessary to reduce the obligatory laps for each race from seven to five.⁷⁹

In the races themselves, chariots were drawn, sometimes by two horses (bigae), sometimes three (trigae), most commonly four (quadrigae) and occasionally even six, eight or ten (decemiuges).⁸⁰ In the case of the quadrigae the horses were harnessed next to one another with the best being placed on the outside. As the metae were always on the left of the chariots, the success of the turning manoeuvre depended on the strength and handiness of the two outside horses (funales) who were not harnessed to the shaft like the two middle ones, but were more loosely attached by a trace

⁷⁶Carcopino, loc. cit., p. 237.

⁷⁷Dio., op.cit., lix.7.

⁷⁸Dio., Ibid., lx.27.

⁷⁹Suetonius, Domitian, 4, op.cit.

⁸⁰Carcopino, loc. cit., p. 238.

(funis).⁸¹ Of the four, the horse on the extreme left was the most important, for the supreme skill of the driver was demonstrated in turning the chariot as close to the spina as possible. Failure of this horse to respond promptly to the rein or the word could have resulted in a fall, loss of the inside track and possibly the loss of a race.⁸² The tails of the outside horses were often fastened together or docked, to prevent entanglement with other chariots.⁸³

The best racehorses were raised in the provinces - especially Spain, Sicily, Mauritania and Northern Greece. No expense or trouble was spared in their training and the Romans were careful not to ruin the horse by using it too soon.⁸⁴ As a rule, the Roman racehorse was not "broken in" until the age of three nor allowed to run a race until the age of five and judging from their names on the inscriptions, they were predominantly male. In spite of their late start, some horses had a surprisingly large number of victories. Tuscus was the leading horse of Fortunates of the Greens and won 386 victories, and Victor, belonging to Gutta Calpurnianus had 429 wins.⁸⁵ Recording one hundred victories was considered to be a great achievement and in its honour, a horse was called a centenarius and had a special harness. Naturally such successful horses as the centenarii fetched high prices, and were eagerly sought out as stallions.⁸⁶ Connoisseurs were well acquainted with the pedigrees and records of the more famous horses, and many Romans, including Pliny⁸⁷,

⁸¹Ibid. p. 239.

⁸²Johnson, op. cit., p. 276.

⁸³Friedlander, loc. cit., p. 38.

⁸⁴Peck, op. cit., p. 355.

⁸⁵Carcopino, op. cit., p. 240.

⁸⁶Friedlander, loc. cit., p. 26.

⁸⁷Pliny, op. cit., viii.

respected their intelligence:

At the Secular Games held in the reign of Claudian, a driver of the white faction named Corax was thrown from his car at the barrier; but his horses took the lead, and after out-running the other chariots, and even upsetting some of them, kept the lead. In fact they did everything they would have done if the cleverest of chariot-eers had been driving them.

The racing chariots themselves were light structures of wood, bound with bronze (Fig. 17). They were closed in front and open behind, with long axles and low wheels so as to lessen the risk of overturning.⁸⁸ The charioteers (aurigae) stood well forward in these cars and literally tied themselves to the horses; the reins were knotted together and passed around the driver's body.⁸⁹ A mosaic found in Rome and now in the Museo Delle Terme (Fig. 18), shows the drivers of the four factions wearing their protective outfits. From this representation it can be seen that they wore a closely fitting tricot covering the arms and legs, over which a leather tunic was worn. The body and legs were protected by rows of leather thongs; their arms were bare and a helmet-shaped cap was worn on their heads, covering the forehead and cheek, so as to afford some protection in the case of a fall. They also carried a whip and fastened a knife into a leather girdle in order to cut themselves from the reins in the case of an emergency. The tunics, caps, harness and paraphernalia of the chariots were all in the colours of their respective factions.

⁸⁸Peck, loc. cit., p. 355.

⁸⁹Johnson, op. cit., p. 279.



Figure 9: Coin from the reign of Caracalla showing the Circus Maximus.



Figure 10: A third century Roman coin of the Circus showing the obelisk chariots and spina.



Figure 11: Terra-cotta plaque showing a four-horse chariot race. The protection for the body and legs of the charioteer is clearly distinguishable.



Figure 12: Relief from a sarcophagus depicting a chariot race, with cupids as charioteers. Cupids on the ground are shown wetting the track.



Figure 13:

Figures 13 and 14: Sarcophagi reliefs from the Vatican Museum showing cupids in a chariot race, in which the spina with ova, dolphins, and metae are evident. In the lower relief, cupids are also shown riding on horseback.



Figure 14:

The drivers were usually of low-born origin, mainly slaves emancipated after recurrent successes. They were lifted out of their humble estate by the fame they acquired and the fortunes they rapidly amassed from the gifts of the magistrates and emperor, and the exorbitant salaries they exacted from the factions as the price for remaining with a particular colour.⁹⁰ Though belonging to a despised class, the favourite aurigae were much honoured and feted, especially during the Empire.⁹¹ In the city their escapades were admired rather than deplored and if one day a charioteer had mind to assault or rob a passer-by the police "turned a blind eye".⁹²

According to Carcopino⁹³, the extraordinary honour which the charioteers enjoyed at Rome was evidently due to the physical and moral qualities their calling demanded. Constant skill, courage and coolness were required to guide a chariot successfully, especially as it was an accepted practice to "foul" the other drivers. No doubt one of the chief attractions to the brutal Romans must have been the sight of the crushed limbs of an unfortunate driver among the struggling hoofs of his fallen horses, or under the wheels of a more fortunate rival.⁹⁴ Constant accidents must have occurred, for almost every ancient representation of a chariot race shows one or more chariots overturned. The Lyons mosaic (Fig. 8), for instance, shows two chariots that have come to grief and in both cases

⁹⁰Carcopino, op. cit., p. 241

⁹¹Johnson, loc. cit., p. 279.

⁹²Suetonius, Nero.4, as cited in Carcopino, Loc. cit., p. 241.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Peck, loc. cit., p. 355.

they apparently occurred in making the sharp turn around the metae. Such accidents often resulted in the early death of a charioteer. Fiscus was killed at the age of twenty-four after fifty-seven victories, Cresens at twenty-two after having earned over one and a half million sesterces and M. Aurelius Mollicius at twenty after a hundred and twenty-five victories.⁹⁵ In spite of these dangers some drivers lived to win an enormous number of victories. The most famous of all charioteers was Diocles, a Spaniard, who counted four thousand, two hundred and fifty-seven times and was victorious on one thousand, four hundred and sixty-two occasions. He started racing at the age of eighteen and retired from the arena at the age of forty-two, with a fortune of thirty-five million sesterces.⁹⁶

Some days before the ludi Circensis, the authorities had programmes posted in various parts of the city, and it appears that everyone awaited the day with childlike impatience. At midnight before the opening of the games, crowds began pouring into the unreserved sections of the Circus. Once, during the reign of Caligula, these noisy enthusiasts disturbed the Emperor, who sent orders to have the people turned away. With guards brutally wielding clubs, panic ensued, and forty men and women of rank besides a great number of lesser folk were crushed to death.⁹⁷

According to Livy⁹⁸, the Roman senators from a very early period

⁹⁵Caropino, op. cit., p. 242.

⁹⁶Friedlander, op. cit., p. 23.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 35.

⁹⁸Livy, loc. cit., i. xxv, 8.

had the privilege of special seats in the Circus. Augustus arranged a complete classification of the spectators and reserved the podium for the Senate and persons of high rank. He allotted other special seats to soldiers, married plebians, women, boys and their paedagogi.⁹⁹ Cushions (pulvini) were used, especially by the ladies, on the hard marble seats, and footstools (scabella) were sometimes introduced.¹⁰⁰

A religious ceremony preceded the games. This took the form of a grand procession, which gathered on the Capitoline Hill, passed down into the Forum, along the Via Saecra, then branched off along the Vicus Tuscus and through the Velabrum into the Froum Boarium and through the entrance into the Circus. It then passed once around the spina, pausing to offer sacrifices and to salute the Imperial pulvinar.¹⁰¹ The procession was led by the presiding magistrate, or in some cases by the Emperor himself, who would stand in a chariot and wear the dress of a triumphant general. Next came a crowd of noble citizens on foot and on horseback, then the chariots and horsemen who were to take part in the games, accompanied by musicians. Next in order were priests, grouped in their various collegia, bearers of holy water, incense and sacrificial implements, and statues of dieties in chariots drawn by horses, mules or elephants, or else borne on men's shoulders and attended by noble Roman youths.¹⁰²

⁹⁹Suetonius, Augustus, 44. op. cit.

¹⁰⁰Peck, loc. cit., p. 352.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Dionysius, op. cit. vii. 72

Even before the first race had started, the excited crowd "surged to and fro, with the noise like the sound of the sea."¹⁰³ At the start, all eyes were fixed on the carceres, in which the quadrigae stood, in darkness, anxiously awaiting the barriers to be drawn.¹⁰⁴ The signal for the trumpet to start was given by the presiding magistrate, who threw a white napkin from his balcony above the main entrance.¹⁰⁵ Excitement seized the public the moment dust began to fly below the chariot wheels, the noise from the crowd was evidently deafening and did not subside until well after the race was completed.¹⁰⁶ The distance run (seven laps) was a little over four miles and could be covered in around fifteen minutes.¹⁰⁷ Skilled drivers employed every device to win, and as "fouling" was an accepted practice, the more experienced drivers drove conservatively in the early stages of the race, and saved their energies for the final laps.¹⁰⁸ The great test undoubtedly lay in the sharp turns around the metae. If the chariot hugged the metae too closely it ran the risk of crashing into it; however, if it swung out too far, it either lost position, or stood the chance of being run into by the chariot following, and being wrecked.¹⁰⁹ At the completion of a race the winner was greeted with a storm of applause and presented with the palm of victory (Fig. 20).

¹⁰³Silius Italicus. *Punica* xvi. 312, Trans. J.D. Duff, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1934).

¹⁰⁴Friedlander, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁰⁵See Fig. 19.

¹⁰⁶Carcopino, *loc. cit.*, p. 239.

¹⁰⁷Friedlander, *loc. cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹Carcopino, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

Such a passionate devotion was undoubtedly inspired by financial and political interests, as well as the excitement of the race itself. During the day's racing, large amounts of money changed hands and, to quote Juvenal¹¹⁰, "all Rome today is in the Circus, such sights are for the young, whom it benefits to shout and make bold wagers with a smart damsel by their side". The rich and poor alike would place bets on the faction of their choice, and the enthusiastic manner in which they approached the races was undoubtedly inspired by their wagers. According to Carcopino,¹¹¹ this could account for the exuberant cries of joy, or the outbursts of rage when the victory was proclaimed; the chorus of obtrusive praise and of stifled imprecation around the favourite horses and the trusted charioteers; the banquet served at the close of the day's racing to resolve vivid disappointments and prevent any inclination towards rioting; and the hail of eatables and filled purses which were rained down on the spectators during the reigns of some of the more benevolent Emperors.

Undoubtedly, the Emperors turned to advantage this passion for gambling and the circus games. The excitement which people had sought in politics, they now sought in the races; however, their rewards were no longer in the Forum but in the Circus, where the factions had become substitutes for the political parties of the Republic.¹¹²

¹¹⁰Juvenal, ii. 103, as cited in Carcopino, loc. cit., p. 242.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 243.



Figure 15: Roman coin from the reign of Septimus Severus showing a view of the circus.

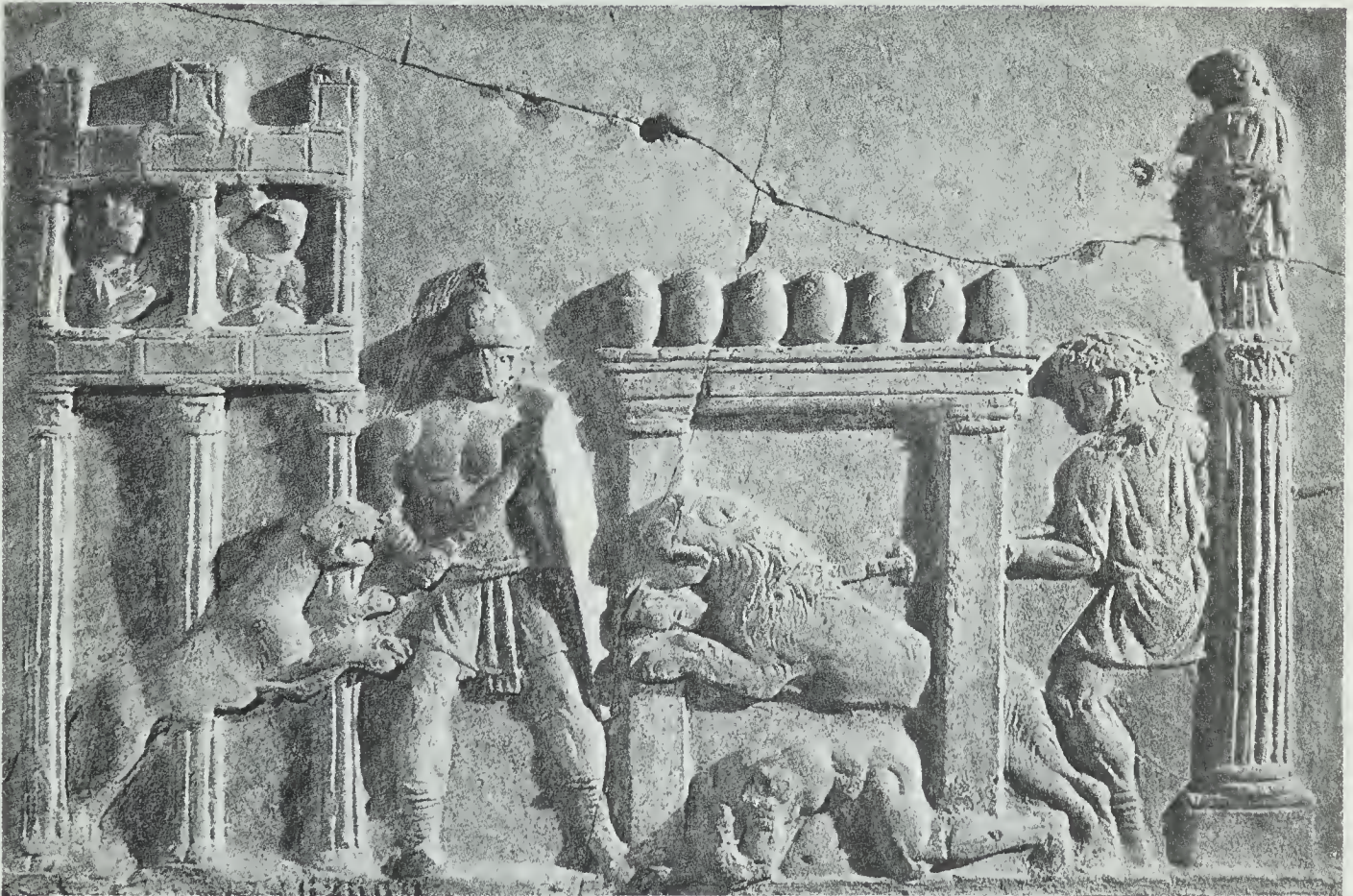


Figure 16: Terra-cotta relief from Campagna showing beast-fights in the Circus.

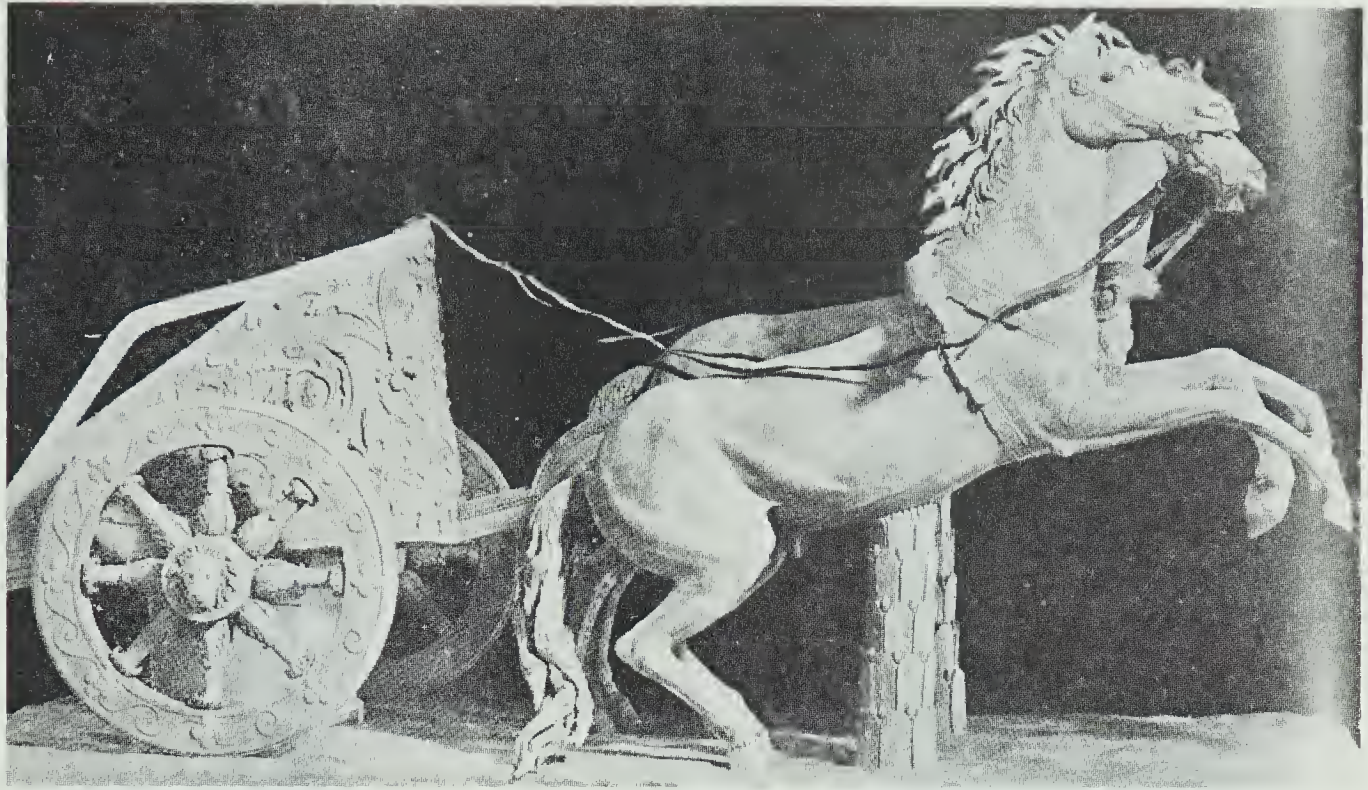


Figure 17: Ornamental racing chariot from the Capitoline Museum.



Figure 18: Mosaic from Naples illustrating the four factions of the circus. The protective equipment for the head, body and legs, is clearly evident.

Figure 19: A fourth-century statue of a Roman magistrate about to give the signal for a chariot race to begin.



Figure 20: A life-size statue of a charioteer holding the palm of victory. Note the protective thongs wrapped around the body, together with the knife used to cut the bindings in case of emergency.

Figure 21: Ivory statuette of a charioteer holding the palm of victory. Protective equipment for the head, body and legs is evident.



Figure 22: Sarcophagus relief from the Vatican Museum representing the scene of a mythological chariot race.





Figure 23: Roman lamp from the first century A.D. illustrating the return of a victorious four-horse chariot.



Figure 24: Mosaic from Germany illustrating musicians with hydraulic organ and horn, playing in the circus.

CHAPTER III

SPORTS OF THE AMPHITHEATRE

The amphitheatre, which is generally regarded as one of the characteristic monuments of Roman architecture, was in reality a late development, and it would appear that this form of building originated in Campania, and was only instituted in Rome at the end of the Republic.¹ Amphitheatres were widely diffused throughout the Empire, and were used primarily for gladiatorial contests (munera) and wild beast fights (venationes).

Up to the time of Caesar, contests between animals and gladiators had taken place in either the Forum or the Circus, but neither had proved to be very satisfactory. In the Forum, it was necessary to provide temporary seating accommodation for the spectators, however, these structures had to be erected before each performance and removed afterwards, delaying business if the seats were constructed with care, or threatening life if they were put up too hastily.² The Circus provided adequate seating accommodation, but the spina obstructed the spectators' view, and the arena was too large for a close view of the contests.³ These considerations finally led the Romans to provide permanent seats for the munera, arranged as they had been in the Forum, but in a place where they would not interfere with public or private

¹Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 5.

²The seats in the Forum formed an irregular ellipse. They ran parallel to the sides, could be curved around the corners, and left only enough space for the combatants.

³Johnson, op. cit., p. 290.

business. By the Augustan period, such a structure became known as amphitheatrum ("having seats on all sides") a term previously given to any area in which seats ran all the way around, such as the circus.⁴

From both the archeological and literary record, the oldest known amphitheatre was the one at Pompeii, which dates from the period of Sulla's reign.⁵ To take advantage of the natural undulations of the site, this building, which the Pomeians referred to as spectacula, was constructed below the level of the ground and tiers of seats were installed on the slopes that were formed.⁶ Of the three tiers of seats, those in the middle were at ground level, while the upper levels were supported by retaining walls, still visible on a famous Pompeian wall painting (Fig. 25) of a riot that broke out at a gladiatorial spectacle.

The elliptical arena (Fig. 26) was surrounded by a wall, little more than six feet high and here, on a level with the top of the wall, were the lowest seats.⁷ The limestone coating of the wall shows traces of iron in the joints below the blocks, apparently the remains of grating on top of the wall, designed to protect the spectators from wild beasts. Two broad corridors connected the arena and the seats of the lowest and middle sections with the outside of the building. By these corridors the gladiators entered

⁴Dionysius, iv. 44., as cited in Jones, op. cit., p. 130

⁵Grimal, op. cit., p. 283.

⁶Ibid, p. 284.

⁷Mau, August. Pompeii, Its Life and Art, Trans. Francis. W. Kelsey, (London: Macmilland and Co. Ltd., 1902), p. 213.

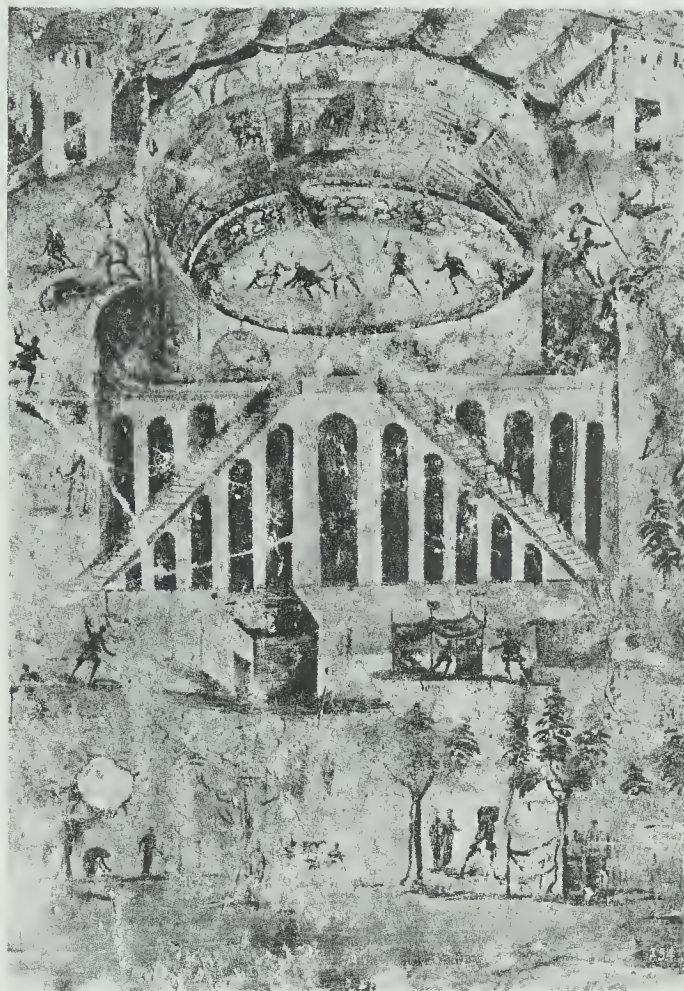


Figure 25: Pompeian wall-painting illustrating a riot that took place in 59 A.D. Note the awning covering the rear of the arena.

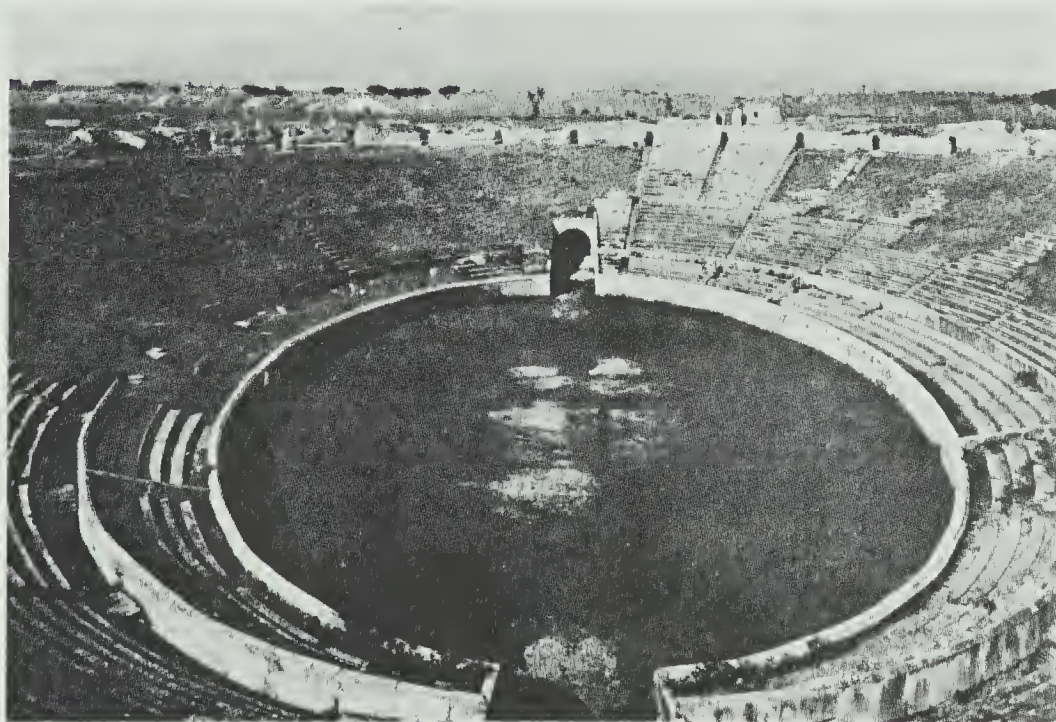


Figure 26: Interior view of the amphitheatre at Pompeii.

the arena, first in festal array, passing in stately procession across the sand from one entrance to the other, then coming forth in pairs as they were summoned to mortal combat.⁸ From the arena a third passage, long and narrow, led to the Death Gate, through which bodies of the dead were dragged with ropes and hooks.⁹

The amphitheatre had a seating capacity of twenty thousand and although there is no definite information regarding the distribution of seats, it may be assumed that the lowest division was reserved for the city officials with their friends and other prominent people, that an admission fee was charged for the seats in the middle division, and that the seats in the upper division were free.¹⁰ In comparison with later and more imposing structures, this building seems unpretentious, and exhibitions held there must have been organized on a relatively modest scale. There were, for example, no underground chambers below the arena to house wild beasts, and it appears that the limited means of this small city were not adequate to make provision for the elaborate equipment and costly decoration found in the amphitheatres of larger towns.¹¹

According to Pliny,¹² the first amphitheatre to be built in Rome was that of C. Curio in 50 B.C. This temporary wooden structure consisted of two identical theatres, set back to back with their curves touching, and mounted on a swivel. In the morning they were left in this back to back position, so that the noise of one presentation would not disturb the other.

⁸Ibid, p. 214-215.

⁹Johnson, op. cit., p. 293.

¹⁰Mau and Kelsey, op. cit., p. 218.

¹¹Ibid, p. 213.

¹²Pliny, N.H., op. cit., xxxvi, 116.

In the afternoon the theatres were revolved, with spectators still seated, to form an amphitheatre in which gladiatorial contests were held. Jones¹³ finds this story unworthy of belief and claims that it arose in an attempt to interpret the word amphitheatre as meaning 'double theatre'.

In the late Republic, in spite of a strong prejudice against the building of permanent theatres,¹⁴ several temporary structures were built in order to stage gladiatorial shows. Such edifices, however, were exposed to the danger of fire and sometimes, too, proved inadequate to support the weight of the enormous crowds of spectators.¹⁵ So far as is known, the first permanent amphitheatre in Rome was that built by Statilius Taurus in 29 B.C. This building was situated to the south of the Campus Martius, was partly of stone construction, and lasted until the great fire of 64 A.D.¹⁶ Nero replaced it immediately with a wooden amphitheatre,¹⁷ however, this was only a temporary expedient, and a larger structure was soon built that was capable of assembling a large proportion of the populace, the Flavian Amphitheatre (Colosseum).

Amongst all amphitheatres built in Rome and the provinces, the Flavian Amphitheatre (Figs. 27 and 28) was the most magnificent. It featured precise designs in both architecture and engineering which included careful calculations of stresses and strains, avoidance of crowding at exits and

¹³Jones, loc. cit., p. 130

¹⁴Tacitus, op. cit., xiv.21.

¹⁵Ibid, iv. 62

¹⁶Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 11.

¹⁷Suetonius, Nero. 12, op. cit.

entrances, perfect visibility, and ingenuity in the arrangements for getting wild beasts into the arena.¹⁸ Its site, typical of a number of amphitheatres, furnishes an example of the "prodigal contempt of labour and expense which Roman Emperors displayed in their great works of architecture".¹⁹ The Greeks in choosing sites for their theatres, almost always availed themselves of some natural hollow on the side of a hill, while the Roman amphitheatres, with few exceptions, stand upon a plain.²⁰ The Colosseum was situated in the middle of the city of Rome, in the valley between the Caelian and Esquiline, on the marshy ground previously belonging to the stagnum (artificial lake) of Nero's Golden House.²¹ According to MacKendrick,²² this site was chosen for its propoganda value, for it was good public relations to turn a detested Emperor's pleasure grounds into a place for public enjoyment. Besides, the huge mass of debris from the demolished Golden House could have been re-used in the building of the amphitheatre.

The building of the Colosseum was started by Vespasian, who supervised operations to the top of the second story before his death in 79 A.D. Titus added the third and fourth stories (see Fig. 29), and Domitian completed the project, making additions to the inside and being responsible for a good deal of the ornamental work.²³ Titus celebrated the

¹⁸MacKendrick, Paul. The Mute Stones Speak, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1966), p. 227.

¹⁹Peck. op. cit., p. 69.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Suetonius, Vespasian, 9, op. cit.

²²loc. cit.

²³Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 6.



Figure 27: Interior view of the Colosseum. Note the sub-structure where wild beasts were contained for the venationes.



Figure 28: Exterior view of the Flavian Amphitheatre.

Figure 29:



Figures 29 and 30: Bronze coins minted in the time of Titus and Gordian III showing views of the Colosseum.



Figure 30:



Figure 31: A coin minted during the reign of Gordian III, illustrating beast fights in the Colosseum.



Figure 32: Interior view of the Roman amphitheatre at Nimes.

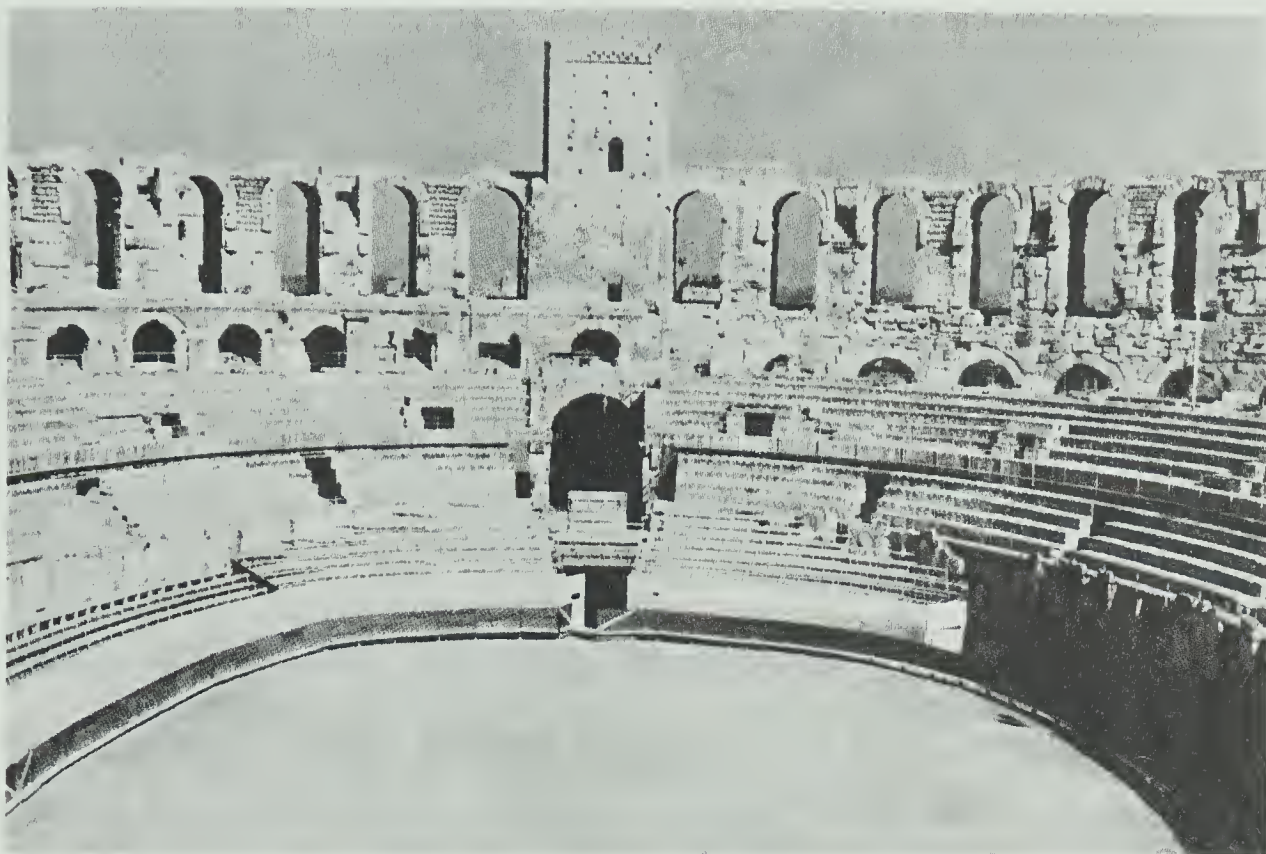


Figure 33: Interior view of the Roman amphitheatre at Arles. This structure is still used for bull-fights today.



Figure 34: View of the gladiatorial barracks and training school at Pompeii.

inauguration of the enlarged building in 80 A.D. with a series of spectacular games that lasted one hundred days, and the slaughter of five thousand wild beasts was witnessed.²⁴

Following the completion of this building, no subsequent public amphitheatre was built in the city of Rome,²⁵ although alterations and additions had to be made by later Emperors. In the reign of Macrinus, the amphitheatre was so seriously damaged by lightning, that the games for several years afterwards had to be held in the Stadium.²⁶ The restoration was commenced by Elgabalus, partially completed by Alexander Severus, and continued into the reign of Gordian the Third. A coin from Gordian's reign (Fig. 30) shows the Colosseum after it had been restored. The Colosseum was again struck by lightning in the reign of Decius, but was soon restored and games continued to be celebrated in this building down to the sixth century.²⁷

Notwithstanding the damages of time, war, and depreciation, parts of the Colosseum still remain sufficiently intact to give a fairly good idea of the structure and arrangement of this type of building. The amphitheatre was elliptical in form, and covered, altogether, about five acres of ground. Its main axis ran north-west - south-east, and was one hundred and eighty-eight metres in length; its minor axis was one hundred and fifty-six metres.²⁸ The materials used were travertine for the exterior, and parts that resisted the greatest pressure; tufa and sperone for the inner walls of the lower stories,

²⁴Suetonius, Titus. 7. op. cit.

²⁵The small amphitheatrum castrense was built in Rome, but was for the sole use of the Praetorian Guard. See Middleton, op. cit., p. 328.

²⁶Dio Cassius, op. cit., lxxviii, 25.

²⁷Peck, op. cit., p. 69

²⁸Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 7.

and brick and concrete for the upper structures.²⁹ The outer wall, or facade, was around forty-eight metres high, and was divided into four stories, which were modelled on the rotunda of the Theatre of Marcellus.³⁰ The first three stories formed superimposed tiers of arcades, originally ornamented with statues, which can be clearly seen on the coins of Titus and Gordian III (see Figs. 29 and 30). These three stories differed only in the style of their columns which were Doric, Ionic and Corinthian, respectively. In order to facilitate lifting, the wall of the fourth story was built of smaller blocks than those used on the lower levels, and was full of secondhand materials - column drums, for instance, which may have come from the Golden House.³¹ The outer face of the fourth-level wall was equipped with consoles, projecting brackets jutting out from the wall. In these consoles were sockets, supposedly for masts which projected upward through corresponding holes in the cornice and supported awnings (velaria) that protected the cavea.³²

The velarium has occasioned considerable dispute among archeologists and no one theory has been satisfactorily agreed upon. Some archeologists have imagined that the velarium extended over only part of the building.³³ However, it is difficult to conceive how such an extensive surface could have been supported along the extent of the inner edge. Cozzo³⁴ argues persuasively that the mast was fitted with a rope and a pulley. The rope descended obliquely

²⁹Jones, op. cit., p. 131

³⁰Carcopino, op. cit., p. 257.

³¹Mackendrick, op. cit., p. 228.

³²Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 8.

³³Peck, op. cit., p. 71

³⁴C. Cozzo, Ingegneria Romana; as cited in Mackendrick, loc. cit.

and was fastened to another below which ran elliptically, at a convenient height above the spectators. Awnings, fixed to these ropes, could have been rolled up or down in strips as the sun's position dictated. This duty was supposedly assigned to a detachment of sailors from the fleet at Misenum.³⁵ The velarium appears to have been made of silk or canvas; and on days when the weather did not permit its erection, the spectators wore broad-rimmed hats or caps (petasi), or carried a type of parasole, called umbraculum.³⁶

The arena itself was elliptical, the major axis being eight-six metres long, and the minor axis fifty-four metres. Around the arena there was a wall designed to protect the spectators from the beasts, but not high enough to obstruct the view. Rollers were also hung on this wall to prevent the beasts in the arena from climbing it and a dismountable fence supplied additional protection.³⁷ In front of this fence ran a catwalk, paved with marble, where archers were stationed to shoot beasts that got out of hand.³⁸

The seats began four metres above the arena, with a terrace or podium, on which were placed marble chairs for the most distinguished spectators. These seats were for the Emperor and his family, the presiding magistrate, senators, vestal virgins, ambassadors of foreign states, and other important persons.³⁹ The individual chairs seem to have been assigned to corporations and officials rather than individuals and in some cases, the names of the various owners still remain.⁴⁰

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Peck, loc. cit.

³⁷Johnson, op.cit. p. 296.

³⁸MacKendrick, op. cit., p. 229

³⁹Johnson, loc. cit.

⁴⁰Carcopino, op. cit., p. 257.

Above the podium were the tiers of seats for the ordinary public which were divided into three zones, or maeniana. The lower two sections were separated from the podium and from each other by horizontal corridors (praecinctiones), running between low walls. Vertically, the circle of seats was divided by vomitoria, or sloping corridors, which carried the large numbers of spectators.⁴¹ Twelve feet above the podium the first bank of seats began, with fourteen rows of seats reserved for the knights. Then came a horizontal corridor and above it a second bank of seats, intended for ordinary citizens. Above the third tier were rough wooden benches and a standing room area for the lower classes, foreigners and slaves. A row of pillars in front of this highest section made the view of the arena rather difficult.⁴² The capacity of the Colosseum has been estimated as high as one hundred thousand spectators, but recent calculations consider that the seating capacity could not have succeeded forty-five thousand, with standing room on the roof for around five thousand more.⁴³

The arena was originally floored with wooden planking, which was removed for the mock naval battles (naumachia) that were staged in the early years of the amphitheatre's existence. Since this had been the site of Nero's stagnum, flooding must have been a relatively simple operation. The wooden floor rested on lofty sub-structures consisting of walls, some of which followed the curve of the building, while others were parallel to the major axis (see Fig. 29). These sub-structures formed a system of passages and chambers and

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Johnson, loc. cit.

⁴³ Platner and Ashby, op. cit., p. 10

in their remains have been discovered dens for wild animals, as well as beast elevators and mechanical appliances, used for the provision of back-drops and scenery for the fights. In addition, provision was made for a vast number of water and drainage pipes, which were responsible for the efficient flooding and draining of the arena.⁴⁴

Gladiatorial Games

One cannot ignore certain testimonies and facts, that attribute the institution of gladiatorial contests to the Etruscans. It appears, though the evidence cannot be considered conclusive, that the Etruscans long remained faithful to the barbarous custom of sacrificing slaves, or prisoners, at the funeral games of their nobles and soldiers.⁴⁵ This practice was derived from the theme of Patroclus' funeral, the vision of which never ceased to haunt the imagination of the Etruscans, and was produced extensively on their vases, sarcophagi, urns and paintings.⁴⁶

According to Bloch⁴⁷, the Etruscans believed that the blood of the vanquished, when spilt on the ground would, for a time, comfort and revive the dead, who in their weakness, needed sacrifices and offerings to restore some of their former vigour. Heurgon⁴⁸ believes that the munera evolved from this ritual, and that the Etruscans progressed from sacrificing prisoners on a tomb, to making them fight to the death in front of it. Such activities

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Jones, op. cit., p. 360.

⁴⁶Heurgon, Jacques. Daily Life of the Etruscans. Trans. J. Kirkup, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p. 210.

⁴⁷Bloch, Raymond. The Etruscans. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1958), p. 135.

⁴⁸Heurgon, op. cit. p. 211

may have also led to the game of Phersu, in which a masked figure (Phersu) with a dog, was pitted against a hooded opponent, whose only form of protection was a club which he held in his right hand.⁴⁹ Several variations of this theme have been discovered on funeral scenes which decorate the walls of tombs in Tarquinii.⁵⁰

Certain surviving features of the Roman games have also given support to the Etruscan theory: for example, when a gladiator was killed, he was hauled out of the arena by a slave dressed as the Etruscan death demon Charon. Moreover, the term lanista, which means "superintendent of the gladiators", is believed by some etymologists to be of Etruscan origin.⁵¹ Finally, reliefs showing gladiatorial contests have appeared on grave urns of the third century from Etruria.⁵²

In spite of these possible Etruscan origins, it was in Campania and Lucania that the gladiatorial contests came to their full development and took on their classical form. From the fourth century B.C., tomb paintings from Capua and Paestum depict pairs of helmeted gladiators, carrying shields and lances, and they are covered with wounds and are dripping with blood.⁵³ Campania was always the headquarters of the gladiatorial profession, recruits were found and trained there, and from Strabo⁵⁴ we hear that gladiators were shown, not only at funeral shows, but at banquets, where the number of

⁴⁹Bloch, loc. cit.

⁵⁰Heurgon, op. cit., p. 211-212.

⁵¹Grant, Michael. Gladiators. (New York: Delcorte Press, 1968), p. 9.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Heurgon, loc. cit., p. 211.

⁵⁴Strabo, Geography, Trans. Horace L. Jones. (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1923), vi.iv.13.

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contestants would be in accordance with the importance of the occasion. It has already been pointed out that the amphitheatre was, in all probability, a Campanian invention and it is Salmon's⁵⁵ contention that the one at Capua served as a model for the Colosseum. Campanian fighters always enjoyed a special prestige in Rome and, until the late Republic, the Romans knew no other gladiator than the type known as "Samnite", whose arms and equipment were initiated from the inland populations of Campania.⁵⁶

Gladiatorial contests first appeared in Rome in connection with the funeral of Brutus Pera in 264 B.C.⁵⁷ A few instances followed in the succeeding century, but in contrast with the munera of the Empire, they were rather small. At the obsequies for Marcus Lepidus in 216 B.C., twenty-two pairs of fighters were involved in contests that lasted three days. In 200 B.C., at the games for Marcus Valerius Laevinus, seventy-five duels were contested over a period of four days; and, in 183 B.C., at the funeral of Publius Licinius, one hundred and twenty gladiators fought in a celebration that lasted four days.⁵⁸ In 174 B.C., there were several instances of gladiatorial games, but all were relatively small, except those given by Titus Flaminius at his father's funeral, in which seventy-four men fought over a period of three days.⁵⁹

Munera were given exclusively by private individuals up to 105 B.C., either in the Forum or at one of the circi. In that year, the two consuls,

⁵⁵Salmon, E.T., Samnium and the Samnites, (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), p. 60.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Grimal, op. cit., p. 329.

⁵⁸Woody, op. cit., p. 733.

⁵⁹Livy, op. cit., xxiii,30.

for the first time, gave gladiatorial games, an innovation directed against Greek culture, and designed to promote military training.⁶⁰ Fowler⁶¹ claims that these particular games were used solely to instruct the soldiers in the better use of weapons. This was a period when the State was in need of efficient soldiers and, according to Valerius Maximus,⁶² the consul Rutilus made the better gladiators teach the soldiers a more skilful use of their weapons.

By the last century of the Republic, gladiatorial games were being conducted more frequently and, by the time of Cicero⁶³, were already being considered the favourite amusement of the common people. As a consequence, candidates for election to magistracies took every opportunity in providing such amusements, and it became necessary to forbid candidates giving such exhibitions within two years of an election. It was found necessary also, during Caesar's time, to limit the number of gladiators that could be owned by a single individual.⁶⁴

Under the Empire such entertainments had become extraordinarily common- some being fixed, others offered on special occasions - and were soon practically an imperial monopoly. As early as the reign of Augustus, private sponsors were allowed to give munera no more than twice a year, and even then, with no more than one hundred and twenty combatants.⁶⁵ Gladiatorial contests had become a wholly indispensable feature of the services a ruler had

⁶⁰Fowler, op. cit., p. 61

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²As cited in Fowler, ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Suetonius, Julius.10. op. cit.

⁶⁵Dio, op. cit., xlvii.40.

to provide, in order to maintain his popularity, and his position.

The political significance of these games can be seen in the attitudes and activities of leading men of the late Republic and Empire. The purchase of gladiators for political purposes had become a common practice as early as the time of Cicero⁶⁶, who considered that popular munera would stand to one's credit in an election. Caesar had gladiators trained by skilled knights and senators and, at his combined triumphs of 46 B.C., exhibited combats with one thousand foot soldiers on either side.⁶⁷ Augustus gave gladiatorial shows on eight occasions, in which no less than ten thousand men were employed.⁶⁸ Caligula had twenty thousand gladiators in his training school, entertained the public with a number of gladiatorial games, and fought in the arena as a Thracian, using genuine weapons.⁶⁹ Claudius is said to have given gladiatorial games constantly, was especially pleased when many men were destroyed, and enjoyed even the bloodiest of spectacles during his meal-time.⁷⁰ Titus gained popularity through his gladiatorial shows, showed a personal liking for Thracian gladiators and himself participated in a combat in heavy armour.⁷¹ Domitian gave gladiatorial games nearly every year and Trajan, to celebrate his victory of the Dacians, provided a four month period of entertainments in which ten thousand gladiators, together with ten thousand animals, were exhibited in the arena.⁷²

⁶⁶Cicero, Letters to Atticus, Trans. E.O. Winstedt, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1912), iv.8.

⁶⁷Appian, Civil Wars, Trans. Horace White, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1912), ii.102.

⁶⁸Suetonius, Augustus.43. op. cit.

⁶⁹Suetonius, Caligula, 18,54. op. cit.

⁷⁰Dio. op. cit., lx.13.

⁷¹Dio. op. cit., lxxv.15.

⁷²Woody, op. cit., p. 735.

Of all the Emperors Commodus had the greatest infatuation for gladiatorial games. He had a room at the imperial gladiatorial school and had all his visits to this establishment announced by a herald. He delighted in the honorary titles of gladiators and boasted of having fought one thousand times.⁷³ He fought publicly with blunt weapons against troop masters and gladiators. On such occasions the senators had to publicly applaud him and wish him well.⁷⁴

Gladiators were recruited from prisoners of war, condemned criminals, slaves, and volunteers. Originally, they were captives taken in war - Germans, Thracians, Gauls and others from frontier struggles, who were given a chance at life by fighting in the arena.⁷⁵ The advantages of these prisoners, direct from war, was that they needed no training. Ultimately, however, as the demand for gladiators increased, this source of supply became inadequate and it became necessary to establish schools, in which men were prepared for the arena. Those initially trained in such schools were slaves and criminals of the worst sort, whose crimes, which led them to the arena, included murder, treason, arson and robbery.⁷⁶

Criminals sentenced to forced labour were often obliged to serve as gladiators and were sentenced to three years of combat and two years in the schools. Sometimes penalties were differentiated according to social

⁷³Dio, op. cit., lxxiii 17-19.

⁷⁴Ibid., see also Woody, op. cit. p. 735-736.

⁷⁵Johnson, op. cit., p. 286.

⁷⁶Woody, op. cit., p. 737.

class: thus for certain crimes which in the case of a slave would involve execution, free men or freedmen were condemned to fight in the arena instead. Included among these condemned criminals were Christians, many of whom won supposedly everlasting fame as martyrs.⁷⁷

Most gladiators in Rome and elsewhere were slaves, but during the Empire, a number of citizens of high standing entered the arena either voluntarily, or were forced into gladiatorial contests against their will. As early as the reign of Caesar, the Praetorian, Leptinus, and a senator, Calpinus, engaged in a public gladiatorial contest.⁷⁸ According to Dio,⁷⁹ Augustus permitted knights to fight as gladiators, and even watched their contests; Caligula caused many men of prominence to perish in gladiatorial contests, and Nero compelled four hundred senators, and six hundred knights, to fight in the arena.⁸⁰

As the number of shows increased, it became harder to supply gladiators for, in addition to those in Rome, there were exhibitions in many of the provincial cities and in the smaller towns of Italy. When prisoners of war, slaves, and criminals failed to meet the demand, innocent men were easily taken on spurious charges, and wars on the border were sometimes waged in order to capture more men who could be trained to fight in the arena.⁸¹

⁷⁷Grant, Gladiators, p. 28-29.

⁷⁸Suetonius, Julius. 39. op. cit.

⁷⁹Dio. op. cit., li.22.

⁸⁰Suetonius, Nero 12, op. cit., see also Woody, loc. cit., p. 736.

⁸¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 287.

As mentioned earlier, in the later years of the Republic gladiators were trained and prepared in special schools. Initially these were private institutions, but during the Empire they were maintained at public expense and were under the direction of state officials.⁸²

The oldest known schools were at Capua in Campania, and Cicero⁸³ writes of a training school for gladiators in Rome, as early as 63 B.C. By the end of the Republic, the enormous number of gladiators required every year in Italy and the provinces made the traffic in them a profitable business. As a result specialist contractors, called lanista, were established. These lanistae had permanent offices, or went about trading in gladiators, buying them, selling them, lending them to providers of festivals, or staging their own games at a profit.⁸⁴ The lanista would hire out his troupe of gladiators for the best figure he could command, for combats in which a number were bound to lose their lives. He maintained this troupe at his own expense, under a system of convict discipline, and made no distinction between the slaves he had purchased, starved wretches he had recruited, and ruined sons of good families.⁸⁵

When the Emperors became the chief supporters of the games of the arena, they established their own imperial schools, and the position of lanista was taken over by a state official known as a procurator. Three important imperial schools, and an institution specializing in animal fighters

⁸²Ibid., p. 288.

⁸³Cicero, Letters to Atticus, op. cit., vii.14.

⁸⁴Friedlander, op. cit., p. 52.

⁸⁵Carcopino, op. cit., p. 259.

were concentrated in Rome, and were said to have been instituted by Domitian.⁸⁶ The largest of these was the Great School (Ludus Magnus), which was built in the region of the Flavian Amphitheatre. A plan of the Great School, engraved in the ancient marble plan of the city (Forma Urbis Romae), gives an idea of this type of school, indicating that it possessed its own arena and fighting space.⁸⁷ In spite of this evidence, clearer indications can be derived from the gladiatorial barracks restored by Nero at Pompeii (see Fig. 34). Nearly one hundred rooms were grouped around a quadrangle which measured one hundred and seventy-five feet by one hundred and thirty-nine. Aside from the rooms of uncertain purpose there were cells, sixty-six in number, hardly more than twelve feet square, in two stories with a common kitchen and mess-room. There were also apartments for the *lanista*, and three entrances which were narrow and easily guarded. Specimens of gladiatorial armour (Figs. 35, 36, 37 and 38) were discovered in some of the rooms, and in what was evidently a guard room were found stocks, as well as the skeletons of four prisoners who had been unable to make their escape.⁸⁸ The walls of these barracks contain paintings, graffiti and inscriptions, which give notices and results of combats, and represent various aspects of gladiatorial life. (Figs. 39 and 40).

Outside of Rome, other imperial schools were situated at Alexandria, Capua and Praeneste, all of which had their own administration. The best possible sites were chosen for these institutions, and it is probable that

⁸⁶Suetonius, Domitian 4, op. cit.

⁸⁷Friedlander, op. cit., p. 54.

⁸⁸Jones, op. cit., p. 367.

Figure 35: An elaborate bronze greave (armour for lower leg) found at Pompeii.



Figure 36: Gladiatorial dress-helmet decorated in high relief, found at Pompeii.



Figure 37:

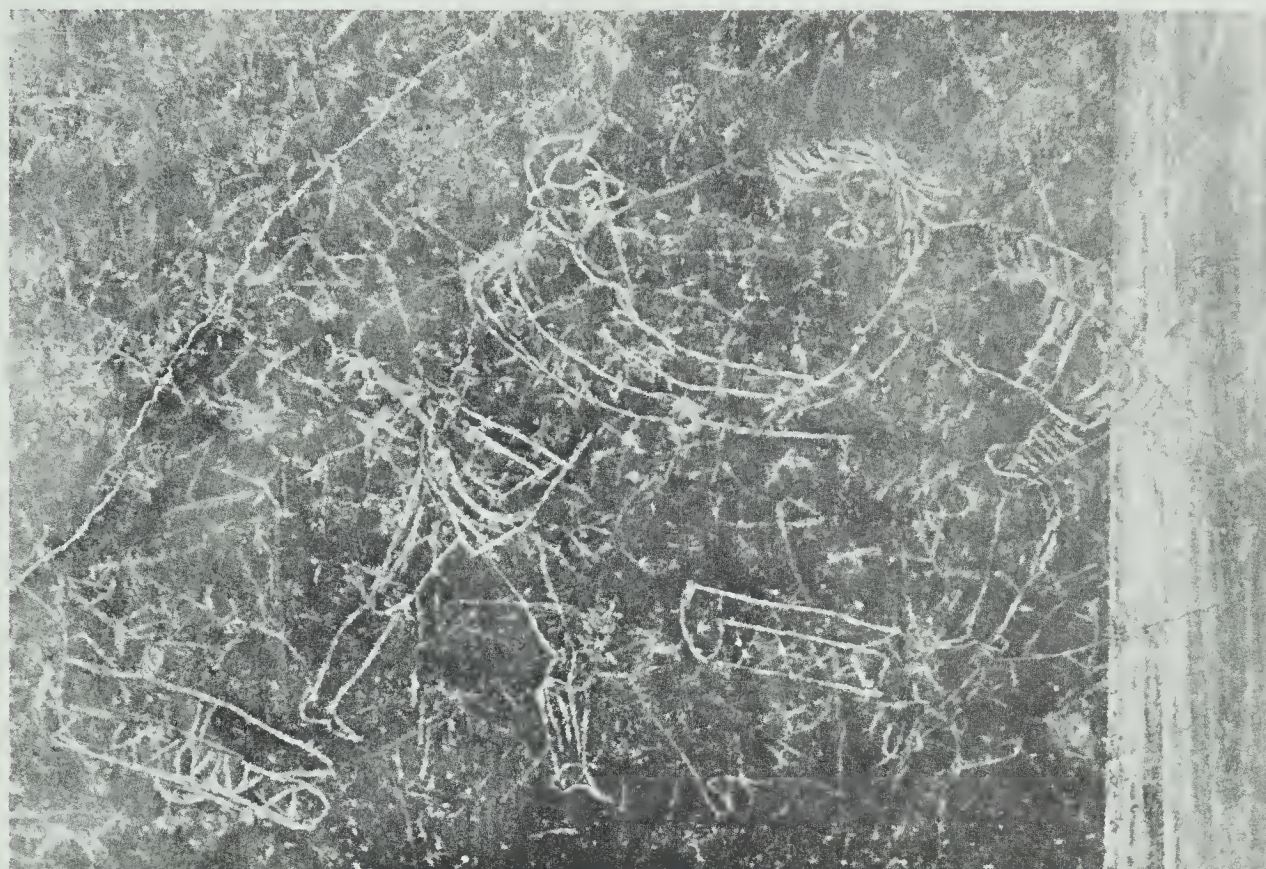


Figures 37 and 38: Bronze gladiatorial helmets with relief decoration, found at Pompeii. Note the protective coverings for the face.



Figure 38:

Figure 39:



Figures 39 and 40: Graffiti from Pompeii illustrating gladiatorial combats.

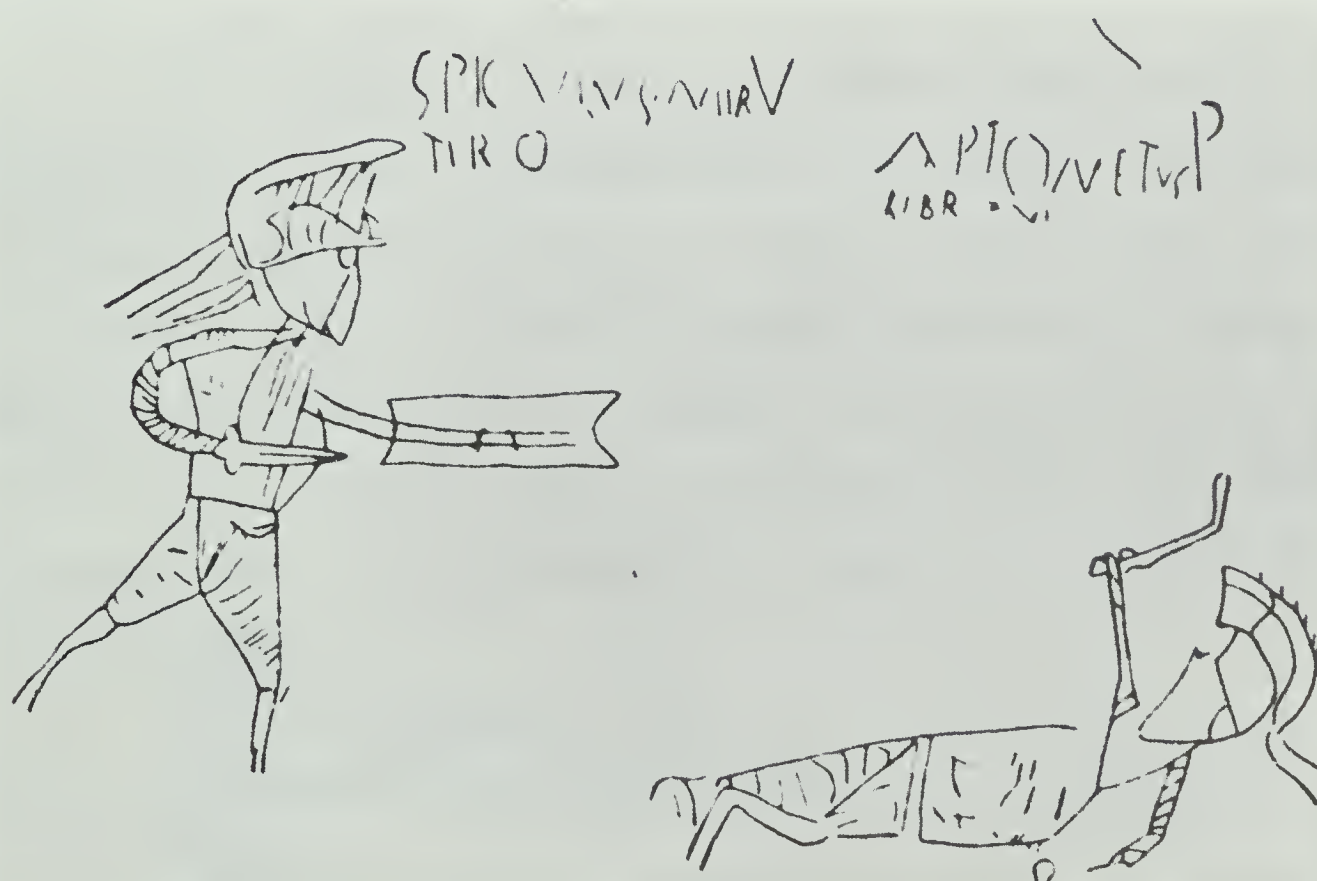


Figure 40:

many similar schools were strategically situated throughout Italy and the provinces.⁸⁹

During the Empire, the functions of the lanistae were performed exclusively by the procurators of the princeps. The imperial schools on the Via Labicana were at their disposal, and under the general control of those directors, each school had a large and complex staff. These departments were multivarious and included armouries, smithies, mortuaries and, in addition, a large staff of instructors, physicians, actuaries and overseers were also employed.⁹⁰ The post of procurator was quite prestigious, and was held as a promotion for retired officers, such as legionary tribunes, civil servants and the heads of provincial fiscal departments, and was a step to higher financial posts such as the administrator of death duties. Even the position of sub-procurator at an imperial school was a very much sought-after position.⁹¹

The teaching of gladiators was a highly elaborate affair involving expertise, which was appreciated by those members of the public who attended the games for something more than blood and thrills. There was an elaborate corpus of gladiatorial theory, and each branch of the profession had its own particular instructor. Novices practiced with wooden swords at a man of straw or a post⁹³, and the weapons used in more adept practice were heavier than those used in the arena. The fencing of the

⁸⁹Grant, Gladiators, p. 40.

⁹⁰Friedlander, loc. cit., p. 54.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid, p. 56-57.

⁹³Suetonius, Caligula xxxii.54.op cit.

gladiators was considered a science, and its technical expressions were generally understood. While most of the spectators would find the various manoeuvres difficult to follow, some did, and in appreciation would shout commands to the fighters in the arena.⁹⁴

The discipline of these schools was severe, and often resulted in ruthless punishment, which included scourging, burning with hot irons, and confinement in chains and stocks. Balbus, we are told, buried Fadius up to his waist at a gladiatorial school, and had him burned alive.⁹⁵ In order to keep the fighters in check, the utmost precautions were taken. When not performing in the arena, the gladiators were disarmed, kept in strict confinement and, to avoid riots, were guarded by soldiers.

In spite of these cruelties, scrupulous attention was paid to the gladiator's health. Their bodily being was always a matter of anxious thought and a healthy location was always chosen for the schools. According to Friedlander,⁹⁶ the school at Capua had an ideal climate; Praeneste boasted pure mountain air; and the schools at Ravenna and Alexandria enjoyed the advantage of sea breezes, that supposedly tempered the heat. Feeding, likewise, was a matter of concern and great care was taken in providing the best diet for building muscles. Barley was one of the more popular foods used for this purpose and gladiators became known as hordearii (barley-men), because of the large amounts they consumed. Smith⁹⁷ claims that the gladiators

⁹⁴Grant. op. cit., p. 49.

⁹⁵Cicero, Letters to His Friends. Trans. W. Glynn Williams, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1912), x.32.

⁹⁶Friedlander, op. cit., p. 56.

⁹⁷Smith, op. cit., p. 85.

were fed on barley cakes and other fattening foods, in order that blood might flow slowly from their wounds, and that the spectators might enjoy, as long as possible, the sight of their dying agonies. Distinguished surgeons were kept in attendance to supervise this diet, as well as to heal the gladiator's wounds. One of the more famous physicians was Galen, who served as a gladiator's doctor, before rising to the position of private physician for Marcus Aurelius.⁹⁸

In spite of this harsh existence, the gladiatorial profession was not without its glamour and rewards. The gladiators enjoyed a popularity almost equal to that of the charioteers of the circus. This impression is conveyed by the innumerable representations, both literary and artistic, praising gladiators and their achievements. Their portraits were displayed in show windows, they were repeated on vases, lamps and gems, and their exploits were sketched as decorations upon walls.⁹⁹ Imperial gifts, estates and honours were sometimes given for their performances; Bato, though killed in combat, was given a glamorous funeral at the expense of his Emperor.¹⁰⁰ Victorious gladiators, even though physically disfigured, were the darlings of the women, who thought it quite the thing to have a gladiator for a lover.¹⁰¹

Gladiators were divided into different classes, according to their arms and their different mode of fighting. From Republican times

⁹⁸Grant, *Gladiators*, op. cit., p. 49.

⁹⁹Pellison, op. cit., p. 202.

¹⁰⁰Dio, op. cit., lxxviii.6.

¹⁰¹Juvenal, op. cit., vi.103.

onwards, foreign prisoners were made to fight with their own weapons, and when professional gladiators began to fight, they adopted the styles and names of these captive races. Such were the origins of the gladiators known as Samnites, who were regarded as the prototypes of all gladiators.¹⁰² The names of the more important classes and their differing styles, are given in alphabetical order:¹⁰³

- Andabatae - fought on horseback, and wore helmets without any aperture for the eyes, and as a result were forced to fight blindfolded.
- Bestiarii - gladiators who fought with wild beasts.
- Calervarii - the name given to gladiators when they did not fight in pairs, but rather when several fought together.
- Dimachaeri - fought with two daggers; wore a vest, a bandage on the right arm, shin pads or stockings and no helmet.
- Eques - wore a helmet with a visor, armour, and a bandage around the right arm, they carried a small, round shield, and fought against each other on horseback.
- Essedarii - were probably introduced by Julius Caesar, and charged at each other in war chariots, which were driven by a charioteer. From the chariots they would hurl missiles at each other, or would alight to engage in hand-to-hand combat.
- Fiscales, Caesariani, or Postulati - were those who, under the Empire, were trained and supported by the fiscus. They took the name

¹⁰²Grant, Gladiators, op. cit., p. 58.

¹⁰³These descriptions are taken from Pauly-Wissowa, Peck, Smith and Grant.

of Caesariani because they were reserved for those games in which the Emperors were the spectators, and of Postulati because, as they were the bravest and most skilful of all the combatants, they were the most frequently called for by the people.

- Hoplomachi - appear to be those whose entire bodies, with the exception of the breast, were protected by heavy armour.
- Laquearii - were those who used a noose (laqueus), to catch their opponents. They wore leather armour with a belt, and the left arm was bandaged. A protective leather, or metal disc, was attached to the left shoulder, a lasso was carried in the left hand, and a curved stick or club in the right.
- Meridiani - were those who fought in the middle of the day, following the wild beast fights which had taken place in the morning. They were very lightly armed, and fought with only a sword against members of the same class.
- Myrmillones - named after the representation of a sea fish (mormyles), which was worn on the top of the helmet. They were armed with a buckler and a type of scythe.
- Retiarii - carried a three-pointed lance, called tridens or puscina, a dagger, and a net (rete) to which a cord was fixed, so that it could be drawn back if it failed to ensnare the opponent. The head was usually uncovered ; a short tunic with a belt, leg or ankle bands were worn and the left shoulder was guarded by a leather or metal shoulder-piece.



Figure 41: Bronze sculpture of a retiarius. Note the protective covering over the left hand and arm.

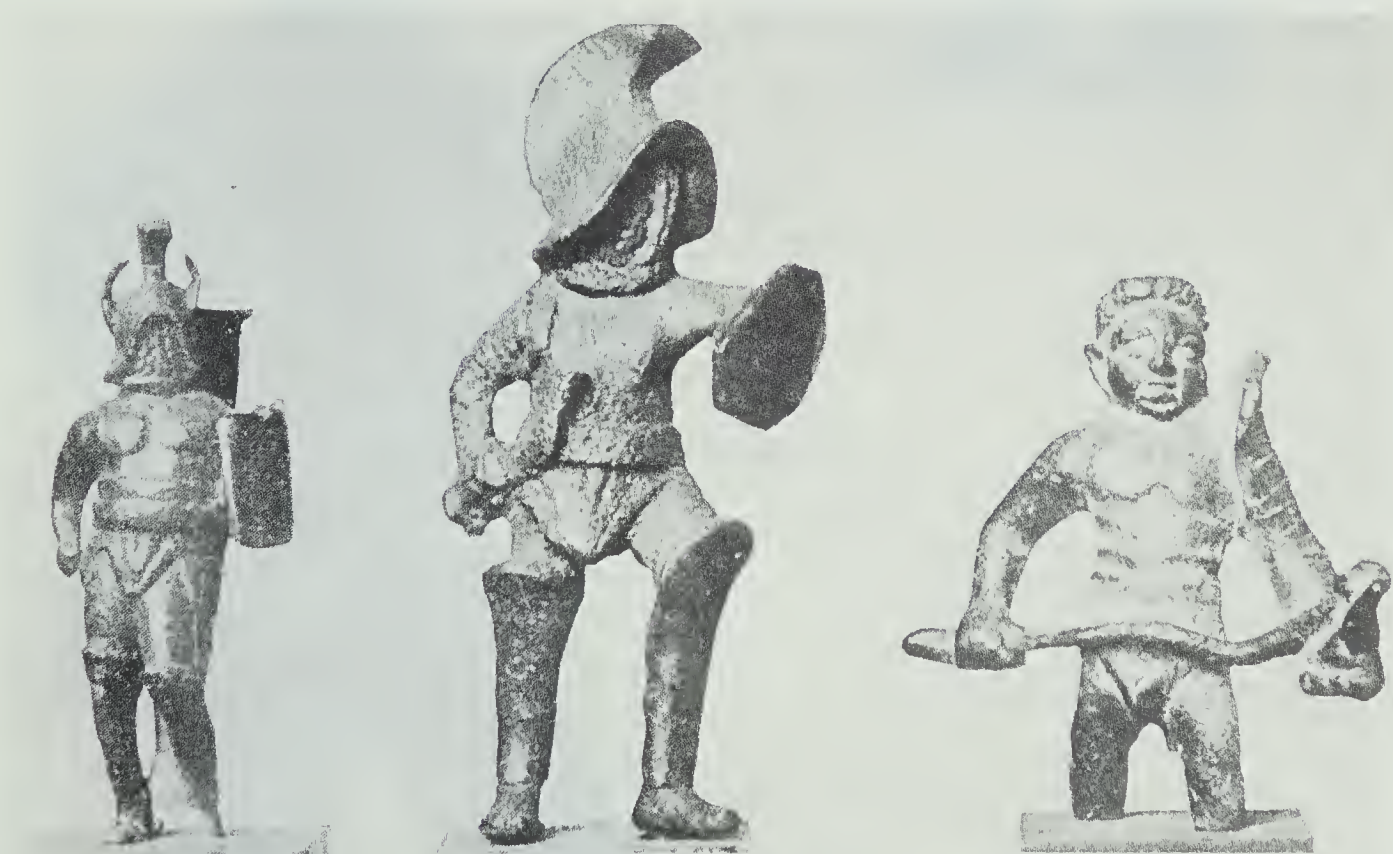


Figure 42: Bronze statuettes of gladiators now in the British Museum.

Figures 43 and 44: Statuettes of gladiators.
Note the protective covering
over the right arm
and legs.

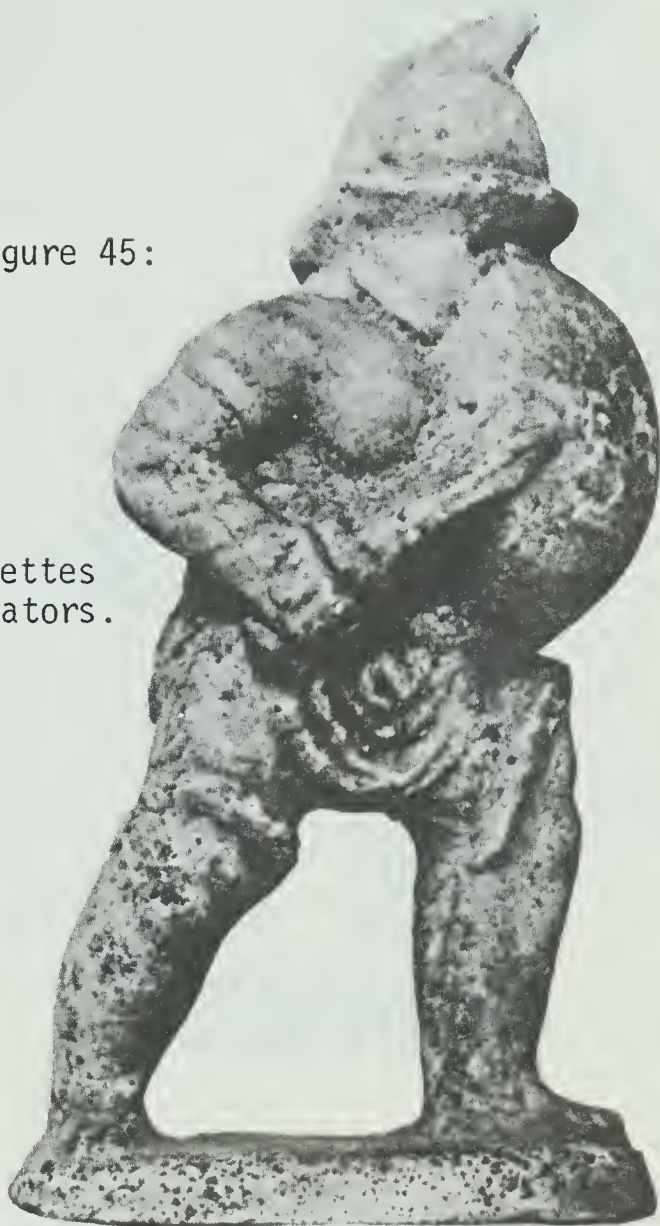


Figure 43:



Figure 44:

Figure 45:



Figures 45 and 46: Terra-cotta statuettes
of myrmillo gladiators.



Figure 46:

Figure 47: Terra-cotta statuette of a Samnite gladiator now in the Naples Museum.

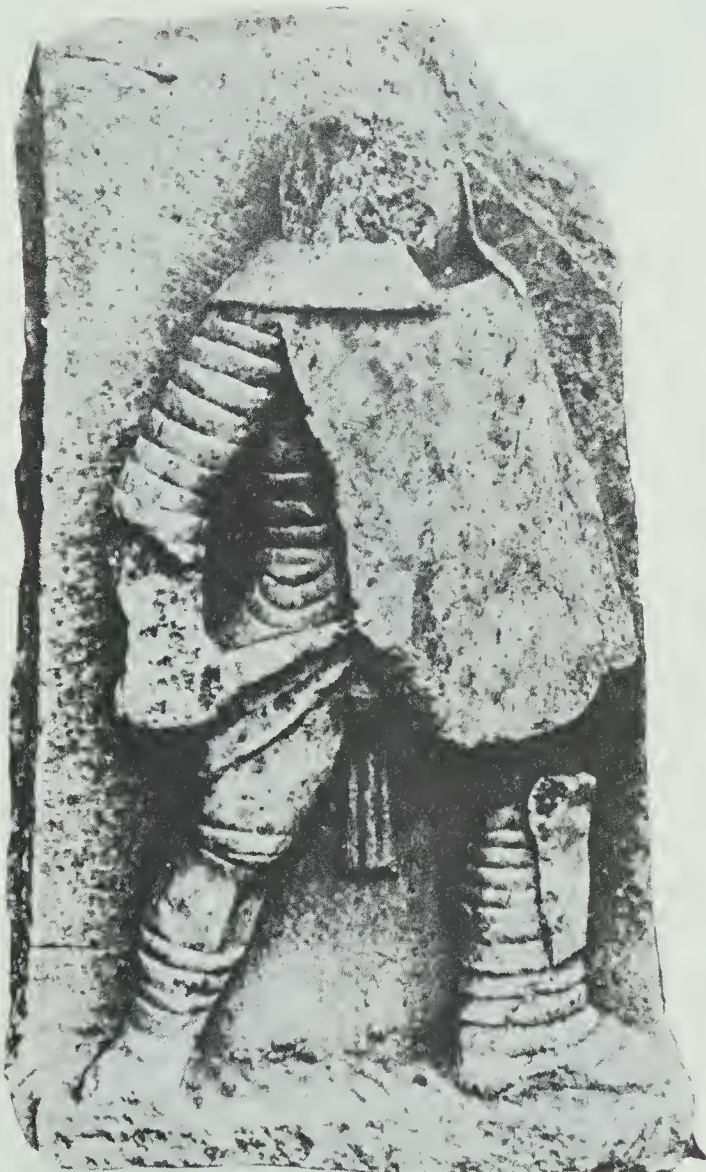


Figure 48: Tomb relief of a gladiator from Izmar, Turkey. The protective equipment for the head, body, arms and legs is clearly evident.

Figure 49: Tomb-relief of a gladiator from Izmar (Smyrna), Turkey.



Figure 50: Stele of a gladiator from Ephesus. The wreaths indicate his many victories.

- Samnites - were so-called because they were armed in the same way as that people, with a helmet which contained a high crest, and were particularly distinguished by the oblong scutum. They wore a greave on the left leg, a belt and apron, bandage on the right arm, and carried a straight sword.
- Secutor - carried Samnite weapons, but their helmet was without a brim or plume. They also carried a type of mace loaded with lead.
- Thracian - wore a helmet with a visor and plume, a bandage on the right arm, an apron with a belt, two greaves, and a small shield, either rounded, or with corners (parma). They carried a sword or dagger that was either bent, or curved in an angle.

From this extensive list it can be seen that no circumstance was neglected that could be added to the horror of the combats, and gratify the cold-blooded cruelty of the spectators. As Smith¹⁰⁴ points out, it was not by chance that a Thracian gladiator was opposed to a Secutor, or that a Retiarius was armed in one way, and a Mymillo in another; they were purposely combined in a manner most likely to protract the fight and make it more sanguinary. By varying the arms, it was proposed to diversify the mode of their death.

The Mymillo could fight against the Thracian, or against the Retiarius; however, the principal opponent of the latter was the Secutor. The Massini Mosaic (Fig. 50), found in Rome, and now in the National Library Madrid, shows a contest between the Retiarius and the Secutor. The lower picture shows the beginning of a fight between Astianax, a Secutor, and Kalendio, a Retiarius, which ended in the death of the latter. The Retiarius has

¹⁰⁴Smith, loc. cit., p. 85.

thrown his net over his antagonist and strikes a blow with his trident which, however, is parried by the other's shield. The umpire appears, from his gesture, to be calling out, but for what purpose it is not evident. The upper picture represents the climax. Astianax, still enfolded in the act, is victor, and is seen rushing forward to slay Kalendio, who has fallen on the ground.¹⁰⁵ Although there may have been ancient precedents for the throwing of the net as a method of combat, his lack of dignified armour (for which mobility was the substitute), meant that the unfortunate Retiarius ranked as inferior in status, and was given the poorest living quarters.¹⁰⁶

The gladiatorial games were announced by advertisements, painted by order of the organizers of the festivals, on the walls of buildings, and on grave stones which lined the main roads leading into the towns. Some were worded in general terms, merely announcing the name of the presiding magistrate, and the date, while others promised that awnings would be provided, and that the dust in the arena would be kept down, by sprinkling.¹⁰⁷ Sometimes, when a troop of gladiators was particularly good, their names were arranged in pairs in the order that they were to fight. Details of their equipment were also given, together with the name of their training school and the number of combats in which each had fought. On such a notice on a wall at Pompeii, were also added the results of each contest.¹⁰⁸ In order to maintain public interest, stop-press supplements, announcing new pairs of fighters, were added to the advertisements every day. These revised lists were then copied out, and

¹⁰⁵See also Schrieber, T. Atlas of Classical Antiquities, (London: Macmillan Co., 1895), p. 61

¹⁰⁶Grant, Gladiators, op. cit., p. 61

¹⁰⁷Friedlander, op. cit., p. 59.

¹⁰⁸Johnson, op. cit., p. 300.

distributed in the streets. Heralds, too, were mobilized to cry out the names of the prospective combatants, and men carried about banners proclaiming the same information in large letters.¹⁰⁹

The night before the games, a lavish banquet was provided for the contestants who were to appear the following day. The public was admitted to view this cena libera, which was destined to be the last meal of many and the curious "circulated round the tables with unwholesome joy."¹¹⁰ Some of the guests, brutalized or fatalistic, abandoned themselves to the pleasures of the moment and ate gluttonously. Others, anxious to increase their chances by taking thought for their health, resisted the temptations of the generous offering, and ate with moderation. The most wretched, haunted by the presentiment of approaching death, gave way to lamentation, commended their families to the passers-by, and made their last will and testament. Greek fighters took leave of their friends at these dinners, while Thracians and Celts were inclined to gorge heavily.¹¹¹

On the following day, the games began with a parade. The gladiators, driven in carriages from the ludus magnus, to the Colosseum, alighted in front of the building, and marched around the arena in military array. Gladiators, especially those who belonged to the Emperor's own troupe, were often finely equipped. A superb example of this type of equipment is the embossed vizor helmet from Pompeii (Fig. 45), the plumes on such helmets were sometimes taken from peacocks or ostriches.¹¹² When the contestants arrived opposite

¹⁰⁹Grant, Gladiators, op. cit., p. 64.

¹¹⁰Carcopino, op. cit., p. 262.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Grant, Gladiators, op. cit., p. 73.

the imperial pulvinar, they turned towards the Emperor, their right hands extended in a sign of homage, and cried: "Hail, Emperor, those who are about to die salute thee".¹¹³ All then left the arena and returned in pairs or groups, according to lot, or to the program.

At the order of the presiding magistrate, the contests began to the sounds of musicians (See Fig. 53), who combined flutes, trumpets, and horns, with a hydraulic organ. Staged with a dramatic sense of climax, the first shows consisted of show fights, which included exhibitions of fencing, tossing the lance and contests between individuals who fought with only blunt weapons.¹¹⁴ Following these warm-up displays, the first fight with sharp weapons was announced by sounds of the war-trumpet (tubae). While the gladiators were engaged in mortal combat, they were encouraged by trainers who stood beside them (Fig. 54). Gladiators who demonstrated a lack of desire, or courage, were lashed by slaves holding whips, or driven into more vigorous combat with red-hot irons.¹¹⁵

When a combatant was seriously wounded, or unable to defend himself longer, his life or death depended upon the pleasure of the presiding magistrate, who usually allowed the people to decide the victim's fate. In a gesture of defeat, wounded gladiators generally laid their shields down, and lifted up, in a plea for mercy, one finger of the left hand. The spectators signified mercy by waving white handkerchiefs, or by raising their

¹¹³Suetonius, Claudius, 21.6. op. cit.

¹¹⁴Pellison, op. cit., p. 209.

¹¹⁵Grant, Gladiators, op. cit., p. 74.

thumbs. Turning the thumb down meant death.¹¹⁶ The Colchester Vase (Fig. 52) gives a graphic representation of this situation; a Samnite has disarmed his opponent (a Retiarius), who stands, with the index finger of his right hand raised, and awaits the verdict of the spectators. Similar scenes are represented in the mosaic of Der Buc Ammera, from Tripoli (Figs. 53 and 54). In the mosaic from Augst (Fig. 55) it appears that the spectators have turned their thumbs down, and the fallen gladiator is about to be executed.

In the intervals between fights, the blood-drenched ground was raked over by attendants, and fresh sand was sprinkled over the arena. The victors were awarded prizes, while attendants, disguised either as Hermes, or the Etruscan death-demon Charon, approached the prostrate form and assured themselves of death by striking the forehead with a mallet, or probing the body with hot irons. The bodies of the dead were then carried out of the arena, through the Gate of the Goddess of Death, and into the mortuary.¹¹⁷

If a fighter's performance had not given satisfaction, or if he were a criminal whose survival was not desired, he was on occasions, ordered to fight again on the same day against specially prepared substitutes or understudies. Sometimes it occurred that the combatants were so well matched, that there was no decisive result. Under these circumstances, the match was declared a draw, and the next pair was summoned to the arena.¹¹⁸

Every gladiator who had served three years in the arena was entitled to his dismissal. Sometimes this privilege was granted before the

¹¹⁶Juvenal, op. cit., iii. 36.

¹¹⁷Carcopino, op. cit., p. 263.

¹¹⁸Grant, Gladiators, p. 77.

stipulated period, as a reward for displays of extraordinary courage. On most occasions, however, victorious gladiators were rewarded with palm branches, and a sum of money, sometimes of considerable amount. The giver of the games also provided prize money, on a scale that was stipulated by the gladiator's contract. Often these prizes were dealt out to the victorious gladiators in front of the spectators, who, it appears, joined vociferously in the counting.¹¹⁹

Although faction partisanship was less vigorous in the arena than in the circus, there was strong feeling in favour of one sort of gladiator against another. An inscription of the slave oil-dealer Crescens describes him as a Blue in the Circus, and a Thracian in the amphitheatre.¹²⁰ The Emperor Caligula favoured the Thracians and trained as one himself.¹²¹ Titus, too, openly acknowledged his partisanship to the Thracian school of gladiators, and would gesture and argue vociferously with the crowd on this subject.¹²² Domitian, on the other hand, favoured the myrmillones.¹²³

Paintings of gladiatorial combats, as well as the other sports of the amphitheatre, were favourite subjects with the Roman artists.¹²⁴ Several statues of gladiators are still highly admired as works of art; of these, the most celebrated is the Borghese Gladiator, now in the Museum of

¹¹⁹ Grant, Gladiators, p. 78.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 62.

¹²¹ Suetonius, Caligula, 18, op. cit.

¹²² Suetonius, Titus. as cited in Friedlander, op. cit., p. 61.

¹²³ Ibid, p. 62.

¹²⁴ Pliny, op. cit., xxv.52.

the Louvre.¹²⁵ One of the better representations of gladiatorial contests was the bas-relief adorning the wall of the tomb of Scaurus at Pompeii (Fig. 57). The pair of gladiators on the left represents an equestrian combat. Both are shown wearing helmets with vizors which cover the whole face, and are armed with spears and round bucklers. The next pair of gladiators are similarly armed, except for the coverings of their legs. The gladiator on the left has been wounded, is leaning on his shield and is shown imploring the mercy of the people by raising his forefinger. His antagonist is standing behind, and appears to be waiting for permission to continue. The one on the left appears to be a Myrmillo, and the one of the right, with the oblong shield (scutum) a Samnite. The third pair consists of a Thracian and a Myrmillo, or Samnite. One of the gladiators, wounded in the chest, and one on knee, implores mercy in the manner just described; he has dropped his shield and lance, and has turned his head towards his threatening antagonist. The fourth group consists of four figures, two are Secutores, and two Retiarii. The Secutor on his knee appears to have been defeated by the Retiarius behind him, but as the puscina is not adapted for producing certain death, the other Secutor is called upon to do it. The Retiarius in the distance is probably destined to fight in his turn, with the surviving Secutor. The last group consists of a Myrmillo and a Samnite, the latter being defeated.¹²⁶

Like the games of the Circus, the munera usually lasted from dawn until dusk, and sometimes, as under Domitian, were prolonged into the night.

¹²⁵Peck. op. cit., p. 734.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 735.



Figure 51: The Massimi mosaic, showing a fight between a Secutor and a Retiarius.



Figure 52: The Colchester Vase, illustrating a fight between a Samnite and a Retiarius.

Figure 53:



Figures 53 and 54: A second century mosaic from Ziltron showing a band of musicians accompanying the gladiatorial fights. In the lower illustration, a Samnite gladiator is shown, with finger raised, appealing for mercy.



Figure 54:



Figure 55: A mosaic from Augst, showing a fallen gladiator about to be killed.



Figure 56: Sarcophagus relief depicting bouts between 'Thracian' and 'Samnite' gladiators.



Figure 57: A first century relief of a Myrmillo preparing for combat.

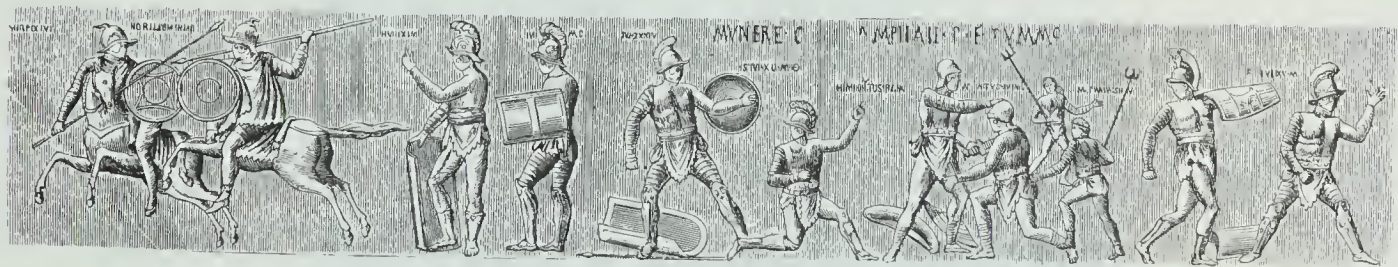


Figure 58: A drawing from the tomb of Scaurus, Pompeii showing a variety of gladiatorial combats.

Figure 59:



Figures 59 and 60: Terra-cotta reliefs of gladiatorial contests.

Figure 60:



Figure 61:



Figures 61 and 62: Roman terra-cotta oil lamps with reliefs depicting gladiators in combat.



Figure 62:

Figure 63: Relief from the Capitoline Museum illustrating gladiatorial combats.



Figure 64: Funeral stele of a gladiator.

In order to appease the spectators, it was therefore important to vary the fighting, and gladiators were trained to fight on water, as well as against wild beasts (venationes), on the firm arena floor.

The exhibition of animals at the Roman Games probably had its origins in the hunting, or baiting, of Italian wild creatures, in the Circus Maximus or elsewhere, as an amusement for the spectators and a religious or magical rite.¹²⁷ In the time of Augustus, part of the ritual of the Feast of Ceres was the turning loose of foxes, with firebrands tied to their tails.¹²⁸

As early as 186 B.C., M. Fulvius Nobiliar gave the first known exhibitions of animals in Rome, when lions and panthers were brought into the arena in such numbers that Livy¹²⁹ compares the magnificence of the spectacle with those seen in his own time. Seventeen years later, sixty-three panthers and leopards, together with forty bears and several elephants, were exhibited by the curule aediles P. Cornelius Scipio Nascia and P. Cornelius Lentulus.¹³⁰ For a century or more, these African beasts were the only ones that made their appearance in the Circus besides the stags, boars and bears of Europe; but, in the closing years of the Republic, the ambition of wealthy aspirants to political distinction caused search to be made further afield. In 58 B.C. M. Aemilius Scarus is said to have exhibited a hippopotamus and five crocodiles, for which a temporary reservoir was set up. Three years later Pompey showed a rhinoceros, an anthropoid ape, and a Gallic lynx. Finally, in 46 B.C., the giraffe was seen for the first time at the games which accompanied Caesar's triumph.¹³¹

¹²⁷Jennison, George. Animals for Show and Pleasure in Ancient Rome, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1937), p. 42.

¹²⁸Ovid, Fasti, G.H. Hallam (ed.), (London: Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1906), iv. 68.

¹²⁹Livy, xxxix.22. op. cit.

¹³⁰Jones, op. cit., p. 368.

¹³¹Ibid.



Under the Empire, the number of beasts exhibited on important occasions was enormous. Three and a half thousand wild beasts were killed at the shows provided by Augustus¹³², and he enjoyed the distinction of being the first to exhibit a tiger at games given in 11 B.C., at the dedication of the theatre of Marcellus.¹³³ At the dedication of the Colosseum in 80 A.D., nine thousand tame and wild beasts were killed,¹³⁴ and at the shows in honour of Trajan's triumph over the Dacians, eleven thousand beasts were slaughtered.¹³⁵

Like the gladiatorial contests, beast fights were staged at first in the circus, and were sometimes held there even after special structures had been erected. The shows were of three different kinds. The rarer beasts and performing animals were often merely paraded for the inspection of the audience but, as a rule, they were pitted against other beasts, or trained beast fighters (*bestiarii*), or else were permitted to devour condemned criminals who were thrown to them in the arena unarmed, or even tied to stakes.¹³⁶ This punishment was commonly inflicted on Christians and, under the later Empire, was reserved for criminals of the lower orders. The *bestiarii* were usually condemned criminals, who were trained in the *ludus matutinus* - one of the schools organized by Domitian, to train men for the arena. If animal shows were given along with other games, they generally preceded them, and began early in the morning. According to Suetonius¹³⁷, Claudius

¹³²Augustus, *Monumentum Ancyranum*, Edited by E.G. Hardy, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), iv.22.

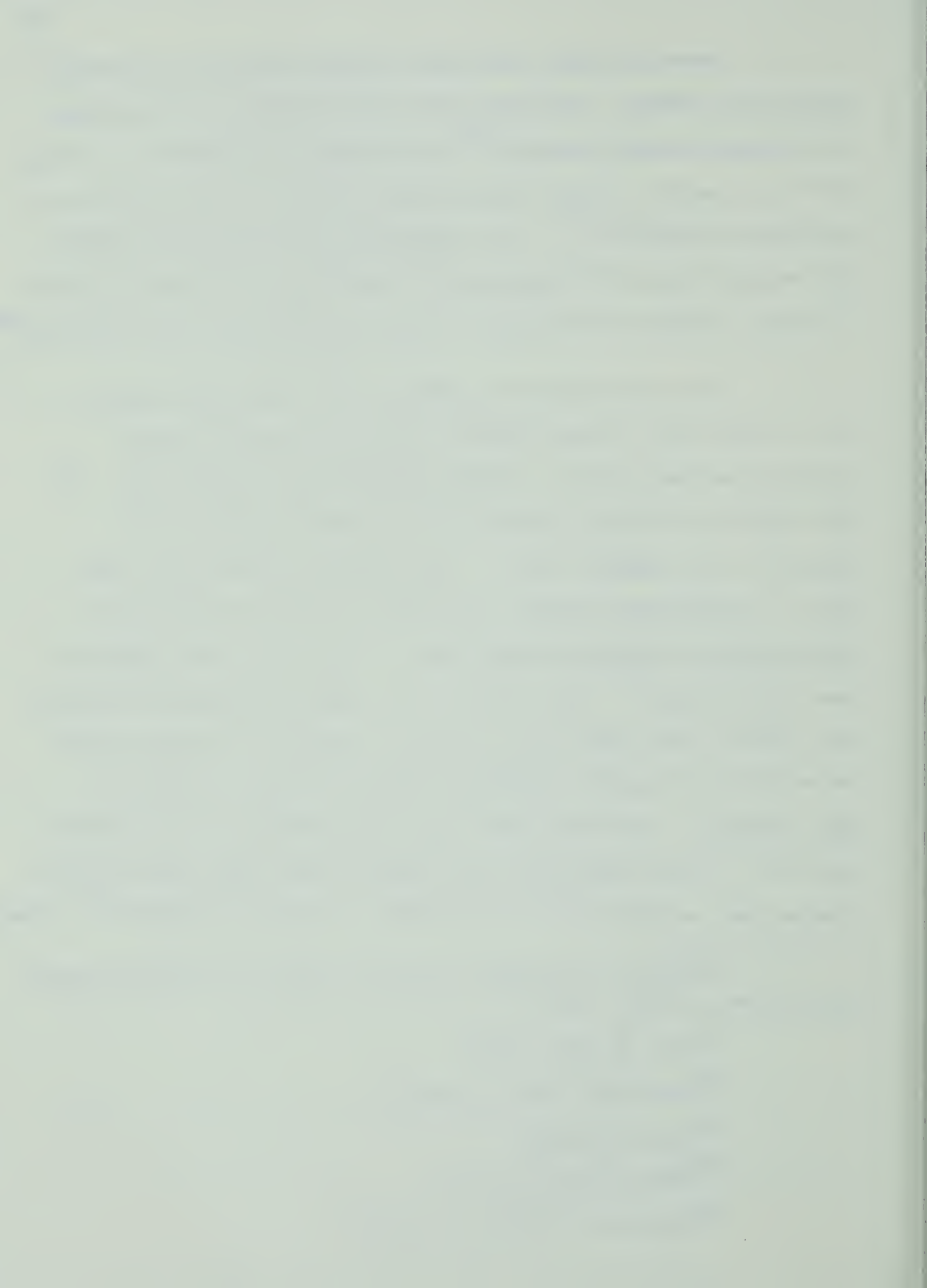
¹³³Cio. op. cit., liv.26.

¹³⁴Suetonius, Titus. 7, op. cit.

¹³⁵Jones, loc. cit.

¹³⁶Woody, op. cit., p. 743.

¹³⁷Suetonius, Claudius, 21. op. cit.



enjoyed these fights of criminals with wild beasts, and hurried to the arena at dawn.

According to Carcopino¹³⁸, there were some relatively innocent exhibitions to break the monotony of massacre - trained animals, for instance, that could perform incredible tricks. Among these were teams of panthers, who would obediently draw chariots, lions that would release from their jaws a live hare they had caught, tigers that would lick the hand of a trainer who had just been lashing them, and elephants that would kneel before the imperial pulvinar and trace Latin phrases in the sand with their trunks.

Venationes on a huge scale continued under the later Empire, but they generally became less bloody, as the bestiarii were better armed and were given better chances of escape. The bestiarii risked their lives, but they were always armed with hunting spears and glowing firebrands, together with bows, lances and daggers. They were often accompanied by a pack of Scotch hounds, so that they were exposing themselves no more than the Emperor in the hunts. Sometimes, to escape the beast's attack, they would scale a wall, or leap on to a pole. They also had access to partitioned turnstiles (cochleae) which had been prepared beforehand in the arena, and could hastily disappear into a spherical basket, fitted with spikes, which gave it the forbidding appearance of a porcupine.¹³⁹

Naval battles (naumachiae), were also staged from time to time in order to vary the entertainment. Huge areas, including the Colosseum, were flooded in order to make artificial lakes for the ships, and gladiators, especially prisoners of war and condemned criminals, were trained to fight

¹³⁸ Carcopino, op. cit., p. 260.

¹³⁹ Ibid, p. 261.



The first naval battle on a large scale was instituted by Julius Caesar at his triumphal games in 46 B.C. An artificial lake was specially constructed on the Campus Martius and two fleets, representing those of Tyre and Egypt, manned by four thousand rowers and two thousand fighting men, were pitted against each other.¹⁴¹

After Caesar's death the area was filled in, owing to the unsanitary smells which it exuded but, in 2 B.C., Augustus dedicated a second great naumachy, in order that this form of entertainment could continue. To celebrate the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor, Augustus organized a battle between Athenians and Persians, in which six thousand gladiators (exclusive of rowers) took part.¹⁴² The most famous naumachia in the history of the Empire, was that given by Claudius, in 52 A.D., to celebrate the completion of a tunnel from the Fucine Lake, through the mountains into a River Liris¹⁴³. The fleets, fifty on each side, consisted of triremes and quadreremes, representing the naval forces of Rhodes and Sicily. The ships were manned by nineteen thousand condemned criminals, prevented from escaping by a barricade of rafts on which were stationed engines of war, together with troops on horse and foot. The signal for their engagement was given by a silver Triton, which dived up from the water and sounded a horn. The banks and hills formed a kind of theatre, which was thronged with countless thousands of spectators from Rome and the neighbouring towns. At first the criminals would not engage in combat, but later did so, with what Tacitus¹⁴⁴ describes as

¹⁴⁰Jones, op. cit., p. 367.

¹⁴¹Suetonius, Julius, 39. op. cit.

¹⁴²Suetonius, Augustus, 43.

¹⁴³Tacitus, Annals.op. cit., xii.56-57.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

"the spirit of brave men".

Titus celebrated the completion of the Colosseum in 80 A.D., with gladiatorial contests on water, as well as on land. According to Suetonius¹⁴⁵ he staged a sea-fight on the old artificial lake and when the water was drained, used the basin for further gladiatorial contests and venationes. Domitian staged a sea battle in the Colosseum itself, in which most of the participants and many of the spectators perished.¹⁴⁶

The vast ruins of the Colosseum, together with the many other amphitheatres that were scattered throughout the Empire, bear witness to the importance that the sports of the arena held in the lives of the ancient Romans. Further, in all Roman literature, expressions of genuine revulsion at these gross inhumanities are extremely rare, which indicates that through habit, even the most humane and civilized Romans had come to either enjoy, or appreciate the need for these brutal activities.

¹⁴⁵Suetonius, Titus 7. op. cit.

¹⁴⁶Dio. op. cit., lxvii.8.

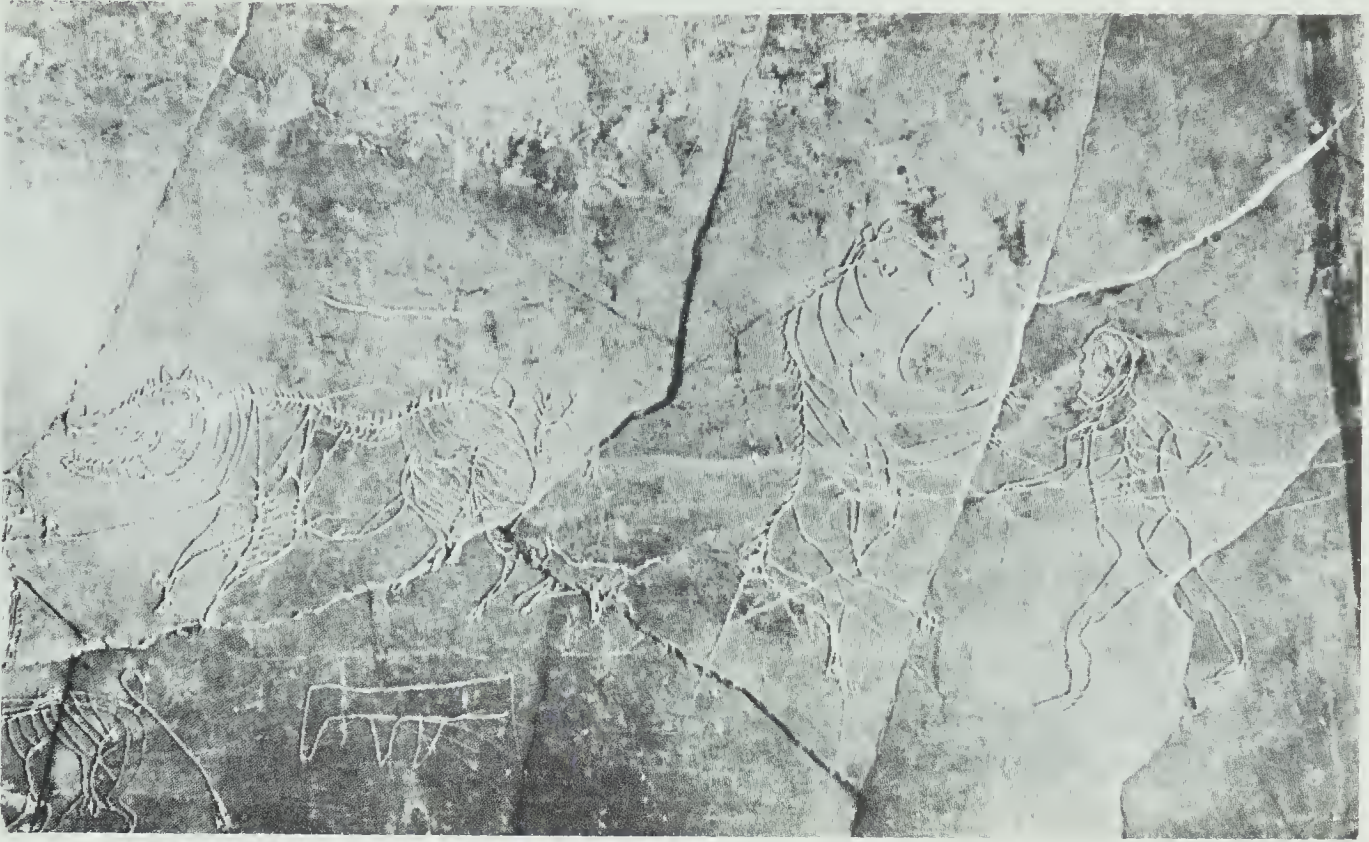


Figure 65: Second century relief showing beast-fights in the arena.



Figure 66: Third century relief, illustrating a fight between lions and bestiarii in the arena.

Figure 67:



Figures 67 and 68: Graffiti from Pompeii, illustrating fights between wild animals and bestiarii.



Figure 68:



Figure 69: Wall painting of animal-fighting in the arena, from extra-mural baths, Leptis Magna.



Figure 70: Fourth-century mosaic illustrating fights with wild beasts in the arena.

Figure 71:



Figures 71 and 72: Roman coins illustrating beast fights in the arena.



Figure 72:

CHAPTER IV

GREEK ATHLETIC GAMES

In the later years of the Republic, and during the early years of the Empire, there were many expressions of dislike directed towards the whole system of Greek athletics in Rome. A number of these objections were based on moral grounds, where the nakedness of the Greek performers, together with their alleged homosexual activities, greatly offended the Roman sense of propriety. "To strip naked among one's fellow citizens", say Ennius, "is the beginning of vice."¹

For centuries the Romans had engaged in continuous wars, and in the struggle they had developed a grim seriousness, which made them despise all that was not practical.² This deeply serious approach to life was likewise opposed to the Greek system of athletics, which was considered by many of the writers to be a purposeless and useless kind of activity. According to Cicero³, Pompey admitted that he had wasted "oil and toil" on games he sponsored in 55 B.C. He also wrote to Atticus in reference to an agon: "the attendance was small and I am not surprised. You know what I think of Greek

¹Cicero, Tusculan Disputations, Trans. J.E. King, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1927), iv.70.

²Gardiner, E.N., Athletics of the Ancient World, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 117.

³Cicero, To His Friends, op. cit., vii.1.

games."⁴ Following the abolition of a Greek athletic festival in Vienna, Pliny the Younger⁵, complimented Junius Mauricias, for wishing that similar exhibitions could be done away with at Rome. Seneca, likewise, deplored the growing emphasis on athletic contests in his day:

How many men train their bodies, and
how many train their minds! What crowds
flock to the games, spurious as they are
and arranged merely for pastime, and what
a solitude reigns where the good arts are
taught.⁶

Although vigorous daily exercise was considered by the Romans to be necessary for health, the elaborate training of the athlete and the strict regulation of his food and drink were thought to hinder rather than help him in bearing the hardships of active service. "The true athletes in the feats of war," says Polybius, "were trained in contests with Samnites and Gauls."⁷ Lucan, a relative of Seneca, also has strong views on this subject: "You will meet an army enlisted from the Greek gymnasium, listless because of their palaestra course, and hardly able to bear arms."⁸ Martial agrees: "why waste the strength of the arms on stupid dumbbells? A better exercise for men would be digging in the vineyard."⁹

⁴Cicero, Epistulae, (ed.) W.S. Watt, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), xvi.5.

⁵Pliny, Letters, op. cit. iv.22.

⁶Seneca, Epistulae Morales, Trans. R.M. Gummere, (Loeb Classical Library, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1925), Lxxx.2.

⁷Polybius, The Histories, Trans. W.R. Paton, (Loeb Classical Library, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1922), i.66.

⁸Lucan, Pharsalia, C.E. Haskins (ed.), (London: George Bell & Sons, 1887), vii. 279.

⁹Martial, as cited in Friedlander, op. cit., p. 123.

Many writers and patriotic members of Roman society were concerned that athletic activities, coupled with the activities of the palaestra, would eventually lead to idleness and the worst kind of immorality. These objections came mostly from the ultra-conservative elements of Roman society, who regarded the Greeks as the original source of all evil, and who blamed the idle life in the gymnasia for the downfall of Greece.¹⁰ Cicero protested to Marius:¹¹ "You love the Greeks so little that you do not even use the Greek road to your villa. Why should I suppose you would long for athletics, you who despise gladiators". Finally Tacitus¹² records the reaction of many Romans to agones:

Games ought to be conducted as of old, when the praetors presided with no compulsion on anyone to compete. Our fathers' manners, disused by degrees, were now being entirely thrown over by a license imported from abroad, whereby everything that was corrupt and corrupted was exhibited within the city. These foreign pursuits were ruining our young men, who were giving themselves up to the shameful practices of the gymnasium.

According to Gardiner,¹³ there was some justification for this Roman point of view. The Romans did not make the acquaintance of Greek gymnastics when it formed an integral part of a harmonious and well devised system of culture, but rather when the nation, as well as its athletics, was degenerating.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 122.

¹¹Cicero, Ad. Fam., op. cit., xii.i.3.

¹²Tacitus, op. cit., xiv.20.

¹³Gardiner, op. cit., p. 118.

He also argues that athletics should not be an end in itself, and that the Romans, with their serious approach to life, may have considered that the honours paid to athletic success were all out of proportion.

In spite of the above criticisms, it may be argued that the agones were not as unpopular in Rome as most literary authorities would have us suppose. It must be remembered that the complaints of men like Cicero and Seneca were no doubt representing the protests of the intellectual and philosopher. However, they do not necessarily reflect the views of the populace.¹⁴ In fact, in a period when there was still a great deal of animosity towards the Greek culture, such remarks may have indicated, quite unintentionally, that the practice of a Greek style of athletic training was becoming alarmingly popular.¹⁵ If this be the case, the increase in the number of agones that occurred during the Empire may not have been an innovation, but merely the extension of an already well-established fashion.

During the Hellenistic period, much of the stability of Greek athletics was due to the sympathetic attitude and support of the Roman generals and magistries. They seem to have realized early the political importance of the old athletic-religious festivals, and perhaps to have acquired a taste for witnessing their athletic events.¹⁶ Roman officials realized that if they were to secure the loyalty of the various nations of the East, it must be by encouraging institutions that united them, and one of these was the

¹⁴Arnold, Irene Ringwood, "Agonistic Festivals in Italy and Sicily", American Journal of Archeology, 62, (April, 1958), p. 245.

¹⁵Robinson, Rachel, Sargent. Sources for the History of Greek Athletes, (Cincinnati: Published by the Author, 1955), p. 164.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 156.

Panhellenic festival.¹⁷ It was at the well-attended Isthmian games of 196 B.C. that Flaminius proclaimed the liberties of Greece,¹⁸ and Mummius, although destroying these liberties fifty years later, nevertheless went directly to the Olympic festival where his important votive offerings were accepted by the impartial administrators of Olympia.¹⁹

A study of inscriptional and archeological evidence also provides a somewhat different picture of the Roman reaction to Greek athletics, at least in some localities, and at certain periods of Roman history. There is no question that the greatest development of the agones took place during the Empire, and largely as a result of the great impetus to the games given by Augustus. But even during the Republic there is evidence of considerable interest in athletic activities from a very early date down to the time of Caesar.²⁰

A certain kind of athletics had indeed been indigenous in Italy from the earliest times, and Livy²¹ writes of contests in wrestling and boxing as early as the period of the kings. An inscriptional list of Olympic victors in 476 B.C., the first games to be held after the victory at Plataea, includes many names from Italy and Sicily. At least one of these victors, Euthymus

¹⁷Gardiner, op. cit., p. 47.

¹⁸Appian, op. cit., i.99.

¹⁹Robinson, loc. cit., p. 156.

²⁰Arnold, Irene, Ringwood. op. cit., p. 245.

²¹Livy, loc. cit., i.35.

of Locri, attained such fame that his name became a household word.²² As early as 186 B.C., the first athletic entertainment was introduced into Rome by M. Fulvius Nobilior, a philhellenic senator who summoned, for the occasion, a number of competitors from Greece.²³ An indication that boxing was growing in favour is suggested by the fact that, in 167 B.C., when Greek flutists sought to give a performance in Rome, they were ordered to box instead, and apparently provided the audience with great satisfaction.²⁴ In 80 B.C., Sulla celebrated his victory over Mithraditis by sponsoring an agon which was attended by so many athletes from Greece that, in that year at Olympia, there were so few contestants that only foot-races could be held.²⁵ Thirty-two years later, in 58 B.C., M. Scaurus introduced Greek athletic contests into the regular Roman games;²⁶ and in 55 B.C., Pompey felt obliged to include them at the great festival to celebrate the inauguration of his theatre;²⁷ C. Curio in 53 B.C. became the first to include athletic events as part of funerary celebrations;²⁸ and finally Caesar, to celebrate his triumph in 46 B.C., demonstrated the growing interest in Greek athletics by providing a three-day festival in the Circus Maximus.²⁹ Further evidence is provided by a coin (Fig. 73) which was minted in 72 B.C., and which shows a naked athlete running with a victory palm in his right hand, and a caestus in his left. At a time when coins were used for propaganda purposes - to impress upon the people the personalities and glories of the rulers - it is

²²Arnold, loc. cit.

²³Livy, op. cit., xxxix.22.

²⁴Dio, op. cit., xxxix, 58.

²⁵Appian, op. cit., i.99.

²⁶Val. Max. ii.iv.7., as cited in Woody, op. cit., p. 748.

²⁷Dio, op. cit., xxix.28.

²⁸Pliny, N.H., op. cit., xxxvi.120.

²⁹Suetonius, Caesar, xxix.3., op. cit.



Figure 73: Roman coin from 72 B.C., showing a naked athlete running, holding a caestus and a palm of victory.



Figure 74: Third century coin depicting two wrestlers in combat.



Figure 75: Two wrestlers depicted on a coin from the third century A.D.



Figure 76: A coin from the reign of Gordian III showing three naked athletes in various poses. The amphora in the background was either a prize for victory or contained oil for their bodies.



Figure 77: Illustration of a mosaic from Tusculum showing various athletic activities.

Figure 78:

Figure 79:



Figures 78 and 79: Third century Roman coins showing naked athletes with their prizes for victory.

highly unlikely that such a subject would be represented, unless it was to appeal to a large number of citizens.

It was in the period of the Empire that the agones slowly developed to become part of the national scene. Augustus appears to have had a genuine liking for athletics, and was especially fond of watching boxing, even street-fights. He had shown interest in Olympia even before his principate, and under his influence the temple of Zeus and other buildings were restored, and the festival recovered its popularity.³⁰ Fortified by his natural leanings toward Greek culture, Augustus set himself to encourage contests of the Greek type at the expense of the more brutal games, and himself held agones on three separate occasions.³¹

Augustus was the first to establish not only frequent, but permanent athletic contests. As a perpetual celebration of his victory at Actium, he established games which were to be held every four years in Nicopolis, a town he founded near Actium. Although these games were originally the extension of a local festival, they were intended to take their place alongside the four national Games of Greece - in fact, early Empire dates were sometimes reckoned by Actiads as well as by Olympiads.³² From the inscriptions we learn that the games were closely modelled on the Panhellenic festivals and included the following contests in three classes, for men, youths and boys: foot-races, wrestling, boxing, pancration, pentathlon as well as contests for heralds, musicians and poets.³³ According to Dio,³⁴ equestrian events were also included

³⁰Gardiner, loc. cit., p. 47.

³¹Suetonius, 43, op. cit.

³²Friedlander, op. cit., p. 118.

³³Willis, William H., "Athletic Contests in the Epic", TAPA, LxxII, (1941), p. 404.

³⁴Dio, op. cit., li.i.

in the program; and some historians have added boat racing to the above list of competitions.³⁵ As a prize, the victorious athletes received a wreath, and the numerous inscriptions of athletes and musicians from Greek-speaking areas tend to indicate that the games were well accepted, and that the honour of victory at the Actiads was as great as that of Olympia or Delphi.³⁶ By a decree of the Senate, in 30 B.C., quinquennial Actian games were founded in Rome, and the first festival took place at the consecration of the Temple of Apollo in 25 B.C.³⁷ Although these games scarcely survived Augustus' reign, the institution of agones and athleticism had been established in Rome, and continued to flourish throughout the Empire.

During the first century A.D., one of the most important agones to be celebrated in the western half of the Roman Empire was the Sebestia, or Augustalia, at Naples. This festival is best described by Strabo³⁸ who, in speaking of Naples, observes:

At the present time, a sacred contest is celebrated among them every four years, in music as well as gymnastics, it lasts for several days and vies with the most famous of those celebrated in Greece.

The fact that this was one of the most brilliant festivals in the Roman world is indicated by the attention paid to them by the various Emperors. The games, like the Actian games, were instituted in honour of

³⁵Willis, op. cit., p. 405.

³⁶Ibid, p. 404.

³⁷Friedlander, loc. cit., p. 118.

³⁸Strabo, op. cit., v.iv.7.

Augustus, and he attended the festival just prior to his death in 14 A.D.³⁹ Titus showed a continued interest in the competitions.⁴⁰ Claudius, in 42 A.D., presided over the games in Greek costume, and personally produced the winning play in honour of his brother Germanicus.⁴¹ Further evidence is provided by an abundance of inscriptional records. The most important single document for the games is a long, though fragmentary inscription, which was found at Olympia. It is not known by what authority the inscription was set up, but it clearly embodies a decree of some legislative body, possibly the council at Naples, to define the rules of the games, and to advertise the Augustalia to the crowds that gathered for the Olympian festivals.⁴²

The agon followed closely the plan of the great Panhellenic games and consisted of two major divisions. The first part, modelled after the Olympic games, featured mainly gymnastic and equestrian events; the second part, imitating the Nemean and Pythian festivals, included music and dramatic competitions.

The athletic program contained the regular Olympic events, the stadiaulos, boxing, wrestling, pancration, pentathlon and a race in armour. The equestrian events included races for horses with riders, and for two-horse and four horse chariots. In addition, there was a race for apobatai, in which two men started in a chariot, but one dismounted at some point and finished on foot.⁴³

³⁹Suetonius, Augustus, op. cit., 18.

⁴⁰Dio, op. cit., lxvi.24.1.

⁴¹Suetonius, Claudius, ii.2., op. cit.,

⁴²Geer, R.M., "The Greek Games at Naples", Trans. Phil. Assoc., 66, (1935), p. 209.

⁴³Arnold, op. cit., p. 247f.

The music and dramatic events followed, each apparently occupying a day, with the contestants drawing lots for position on the preceding day. These events did not form part of the original program and were probably added after the celebration of Augustus' death in 18 A.D.⁴⁴ The music and dramatic program included the following events: trumpeters, non-cyclic cytharists, clyclic-flutists, comic actors of two types, tragic actors and pantomime dancers. To these can be added, from other inscriptions, citharodes, eubogists and probably lyric poets.⁴⁵ As Greek influence became more pronounced, the custom of crowning poets at musical and dramatic contests gained ground, and gave considerable impetus to the writing of poetry. This apparently happened at Naples, where the contest in Greek poetry became one of the most renowned of the competitions, and probably accounts for Claudius' continued interest.⁴⁶

As at Olympia, the competitions were limited to boys over seventeen and under twenty years of age. It also appears that some of the boys' events were limited to the citizens of Naples only. While in general it may be assumed that native talent had more chance in the events for boys than for men, there seem to have been a good many transient athletes even among the boys. Such an athlete was an Alexandrian, T. Flavius Archibius who, while still a youth, had won victories in the pancration, boxing and wrestling over the whole Roman Empire.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Suetonius, xxiii.5., op. cit.

⁴⁵Geer, op. cit., p. 212-213.

⁴⁶Arnold, loc. cit., p. 247.

⁴⁷I.G. xiv.747, as cited in Geer, op. cit., p. 210-211.

The inscriptions provide us with further information regarding expense money and prizes. Contestants were each allowed one drachma a day for the thirty days preceding the games, and shortly before the competitions this was increased to two and a half drachmae for the boys, and three for the men. All contestants in the gymnastic events were required to enroll thirty days before the start of the games and were to report at the gymnasium. Failure to give the right name resulted in a fine or a beating; and late registration was permitted, only if excused through illness, highway robbery, or shipwreck.⁴⁸ The prizes for the gymnastic events were crowns of wheat for the men, and crowns, but probably not of the same material, for the boys. Where there was no award, either because of a tie or because of a lack of entries, the crown was to be deposited in the gymnasium. For the musical and dramatic contests cash prizes were offered. For tragic actors the prize was three thousand drachmae and, for the pantomime dancers, four-thousand drachmae. The festival lasted at least until the third century A.D.⁴⁹

Another significant festival of the first century A.D., which is mentioned in both the inscriptions and the literary references, and lavishly imitative of Greek customs, is the Neronia, an agon instituted by Nero in 60 A.D. The agon was celebrated with the usual gymnastic, musical, and dramatic contests, but the musical and dramatic contests were the dominating features.⁵⁰ According to Suetonius,⁵¹ at the first celebration of these games, Nero appointed ex-consuls to preside over the contest, and they occupied the seats of the praetors. Nero personally went down into the orchestra among the senators and

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 209.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 212.

⁵⁰Arnold, op. cit., p. 248.

⁵¹Suetonius, Nero 12, as cited in Arnold, Ibid.

accepted the prize for Latin oratory and verse, for which all the most eminent men had contested, but which was given to him with their unanimous consent.

At the first celebration, the gymnastic contests were held in the Saepta and the Vestal Virgins were invited to imitate the customs at Olympia, where the priestesses of Ceres were able to attend. About the same time, Nero had a gymnasium attached to his thermae, and at its dedication distributed oil to the competitors as well as to the senators and knights, a plain hint to the upper class to take part in these contests.⁵² During the festival many assumed Greek dress. After the second celebration in 65 A.D., and its continuation in 66 A.D., the Neronia are no longer mentioned in the literature, and were possibly abolished after Nero's death. Gordian III is said to have restored and extended them in 240 A.D. and, according to Friedlander⁵³, from that time on the festival was called the "contest of Minerva".

Even more brilliant than the Augustalia or the Neronia was the Capitolia which was held at Rome. This agon was instituted by Domitian as a quinquennial festival in 86 A.D., and was planned as a Roman replica of the Olympic games - in fact Domitian gave the name Olympia to the celebration.⁵⁴ As with the Augustalia, gymnastic, equestrian, music and dramatic contests were included in the program. The prize was an oak wreath which was presented by the Emperor himself, who was dressed in Greek uniform.⁵⁵

⁵²Friedlander, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Arnold, loc. cit., p. 248.

⁵⁵Suetonius, Domitian⁴, op. cit.

For the athletic events, Domitian instituted competitions for girls after the Spartan custom, and although this event did not survive, it is evident from Dio⁵⁶ that women continued to play some part in these public gymnastic events. As a rule, competition was left mainly to Greek competitors, whose numerous extant memorials boast of the wreaths of victory. One Titus Flavius Artemidorus won the victory crown in four successive Capitoline Olympiads (94 A.D. - 106 A.D.), the first time in the boys' pancration, and three other times in the men's events; and Aurelius Helix was victorious in both the wrestling and boxing events at the Capitoline agon, a feat never before achieved in Rome.⁵⁷ Further evidence of the importance attached to athletic competitions at this time may be judged from the fact that Domitian built a permanent stadium on the Campus Martius, which was capable of holding thirty to thirty-three thousand spectators.⁵⁸

For the musical and dramatic performances Domitian had a covered theatre, the Odeum, built on the Campus Martius by the famous architect Apollodorus.⁵⁹ As at the Augustalia, great emphasis seems to have been placed on poetry competitions. To win the award in the Greek and Latin poetry competition at the Capitolia remained the highest ambition of poets throughout the Empire. Contestants came from far and distant lands in the hope of receiving the wreath of oak and olive leaves from the Emperor's hand.⁶⁰

⁵⁶Dio, op. cit., lxxvi.16.

⁵⁷Friedlander, op. cit., p. 120.

⁵⁸Grimal, op. cit., p. 317.

⁵⁹Friedlander, loc. cit., p. 120.

⁶⁰Ibid.

The agon Capitolinus lasted until the fourth century A.D., and its memory was preserved and honoured throughout the Middle Ages.⁶¹

There is sufficient evidence to show that the Eusebia, at Puteoli, was also one of the more significant agones held during the Empire. It was a quinquennial festival founded by Antoninus Pius in honour of his father Hadrian. Judging from the frequent references to the Eusebia in the inscriptions, it must have been a festival celebrated with considerable splendour.⁶² Except for the names of some of the contests (heralds, dolichodromos, wrestling, boxing and pancration), we know nothing of the details of the celebration, apart from the fact that it lasted until the third century.⁶³

Of the other agones of the Empire, little is known apart from their names. The inscriptional records do not give a detailed list of contestants as they do in other parts of the Greek world, but whenever the competitors are referred to, the indications are that the types of contests in all the festivals were essentially the same as at the great games of Greece.⁶⁴ There was a festival to Minerva at Alba, founded by Domitian; a Heraclea agon probably founded by Trajan and revived by Caracalla; an agon to the Sun god instituted by Aurelian in 277 A.D., and a third-century agon dedicated to Minerva during the reign of Gordian III.⁶⁵

Apart from these agones, under the Empire, especially during the

⁶¹Arnold, loc. cit., p. 248.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 250.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 249.

third century, the appearance of athletes, in spectacles of every kind, became a more common occurrence. Thus Severus, to celebrate his triumph, summoned musical and gymnastic performers from all parts of the Empire; and the coins of this celebration, together with those of Gordian III, show athletes performing in the Circus Maximus (Fig. 76, 78 and 79). After the fifth century, athletes may have supplanted the gladiators altogether; thus, at the consular games of Flavius Mallius Theodorus, we find evidence of athletes, but no gladiators; and in the astrological work of Famicus Maternus in 350 A.D., nativities of gladiators are far less frequent than those of athletes, who are often mentioned with their masters as being in the service of great men.⁶⁶

The athletes of the Empire, after pursuing their individual ways for centuries, eventually organized guilds (synods), to promote their common interests and to seek valuable recognition and privileges from the Roman government. The most famous of these guilds was the "Sacred Guild of Roving Athletes Devoted to Hercules". This guild was ecumenical and consisted of federated chapters.⁶⁷ According to Gardiner⁶⁸ it was originally formed at Sardis, but was transferred to Rome during the reign of Hadrian and served as headquarters for an international federation of professional athletes. A papyrus in the British Museum, which appears to be a diploma of membership, gives an indication of the legal status and authorized powers and privileges of this guild.⁶⁹ The membership fee was apparently fixed at the sum of one

⁶⁶Friedlander, op. cit., p. 122.

⁶⁷Forbes, Clarence. E., "Ancient Athletic Guilds," Classical Philology, (1965), p. 238.

⁶⁸Gardiner, op.cit., p. 107.

⁶⁹Forbes, loc. cit., p. 238.

hundred denarii. The guild could apparently deal with the Emperors via letter, or personally through its officials or chosen envoys. These officials were all eminent athletes from different parts of the Empire.

In civil rank, athletes stood higher at Rome than any other public artists, and privileges of one kind or another, fell to the lot of those who made athletics a life career.⁷⁰ If one were an athlete in Egypt, for example, it meant being in a class with artists and intellectuals, who enjoyed exemption from expensive public duties, magistracies and liturgies.⁷¹ In Hermopolis, there have been found papyri⁷² which contain fragments from the records of municipal administration and include references to retired athletes who were employed as city administrators, and who were praised as civic benefactors and high officers in world-wide guilds. According to Robinson⁷³, there seems to be no reason why the picture they present may not safely be taken as being typical of life in the other cities shared by Greek colonists throughout the Greek-Roman world. These wealthy, honoured athletes, who were important enough to receive cordial, approving letters from Roman Emperors in answer to their requests about athletic benefits, are represented in a far different manner to the athletes described by the ancient writers.

Generally, the social position of an athlete in the early Empire was far better in the Greek provinces than in Rome or in Italy. It seems probable that the Greek young folk of good families looked with increasing favour on a life-time career in athletics, especially since they had been

⁷⁰Friedlander, op. cit., p. 126.

⁷¹Woody, op. cit., p. 751.

⁷²See Robinson, op. cit., p. 176.

⁷³Ibid.

shut out from many other possibilities of livelihood, after the Romans assumed the responsibilities of defense, and of the government of their fatherland. In such a profession their youth could be spent in a glorious whirl of highly remunerative performances, and when they reached retirement age they no longer needed to fear that they would be cast away like "old cloaks".⁷⁴

The most popular events at the agones were the fighting events, boxing, wrestling and the pancration. These became increasingly brutalized during the Empire and, contrary to the Greek tradition, were fought with the danger of bodily disfigurement and serious injury. Marcus Aurelius⁷⁵ referred to injuries through athletes tearing with their nails and butting with their heads during athletic competitions. A mosaic from Tusculum (Fig. 77) shows several of these fighting contests, which are being conducted in a Roman palaestra. In the lower corner, to the left, is the area where clothes were deposited. A mantle lies on the ground; across it a trumpet, near which is a shell-shaped object, no doubt for use in the bath. Close by stands a table, on which is a bust of some benefactor or famous athlete. Underneath, is an amphora which was possibly used for drawing lots. A victor to the right is holding a palm, and is being crowned by an official. To the left is the defeated athlete, who is shown seated and holding his head. Next is a wrestler, with his fallen opponent squeezed between his legs, while an official rushes towards him with a whip in his right hand. In the right hand corner, two boxers are shown, wearing the distinctive caestus. In the middle row is a runner, a jumper with weights, and two wrestling groups, one

⁷⁴Ibid, p. 176-177.

⁷⁵Marcus Aurelius, as cited in Woody, op. cit., p. 669.

standing, the other on the ground. In each case one wrestler has jumped on the other's back. In the top line, boxers, wrestlers and discus-throwers are shown.

References to boxing are common in the literature. Although the ancient writers provide little indication as to the science of the sport, they do reflect a general interest in the activity and suggest that boxing was a common matter, understood and appreciated by the general public.⁷⁶ Suetonius⁷⁷ refers to Marcellus as being a boxer who understood "head to the left", but who had no real talent. Boxing was both a private exercise of the gymnasium (see Fig. 77) and also a public spectacle. Quintilian⁷⁸ claims that the gymnast will turn his pupils into runners, boxers, or wrestlers according to their different abilities, and will teach a pancrationist all the tricks of every branch of the science, and not merely to use his fist and heels.

The Roman boxing glove (caestus), was more of a lethal weapon than the soft thongs that were used as protective equipment in the traditional Greek competitions. Gardiner⁷⁹ claims that the caestus was not introduced into Rome until the third century, and that prior to that time the Greek sphairai, or "sharp thongs" were used. However Virgil⁸⁰, in his Aeneid, refers to "gloves..... all stiff with in sewn lead and iron" and so, for the purposes of this study, the term caestus will be used to describe all types of Roman

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Suetonius, Grammaticus, 22. op. cit.

⁷⁸ as cited in Woody, loc. cit., p. 669.

⁷⁹ Gardiner, op. cit., p. 198.

⁸⁰ Virgil, op. cit., p. 400.

hand-wear.

The caestus is well represented in the statue of the Seated Boxer in the Terme Museum at Rome (Fig. 80) and the statue of a boxer from the Naples Museum (Fig. 81). The caestus consisted of two parts, a glove and a hard leather or metallic ring encircling the knuckles. The glove extends almost to the elbow, and ends in a thick strip of fleece which served to protect the arm. The glove itself appears to have been padded, the ends of the fingers are cut off, and there is an opening on the inside. Another form of caestus is shown on a boxer from the Caracalla mosaic (Fig. 82). Here, the hand appears to be encased in a hard ball or cylinder, from the back of which, over the knuckles, is a toothed projection. The arm is protected by a padded sleeve which extends above the elbow and which is secured by straps. Athletes wore caps and lappets to protect their ears when boxing. According to Schriebner, these headpieces were made of felt or padded leather and are well illustrated by the Fabretti head.⁸¹

The change in the form of the glove completely altered the boxing technique. As the glove developed into more of a lethal weapon the boxing style became less scientific and more brutal. The Seated Boxer (Fig. 80) provides a graphic illustration of the bodily disfigurement peculiar to this type of activity. The boxer is shown with a scarred face, broken nose, and "cauliflower" ears - probably the result of a long, and distinguished career.

Numerous references to wrestling testify to its common practice. Quintilian's references to the contests of the wrestling school, together with the tricks of attack and defence, were undoubtedly made to an audience

⁸¹Schriebner, op. cit., p. 48.

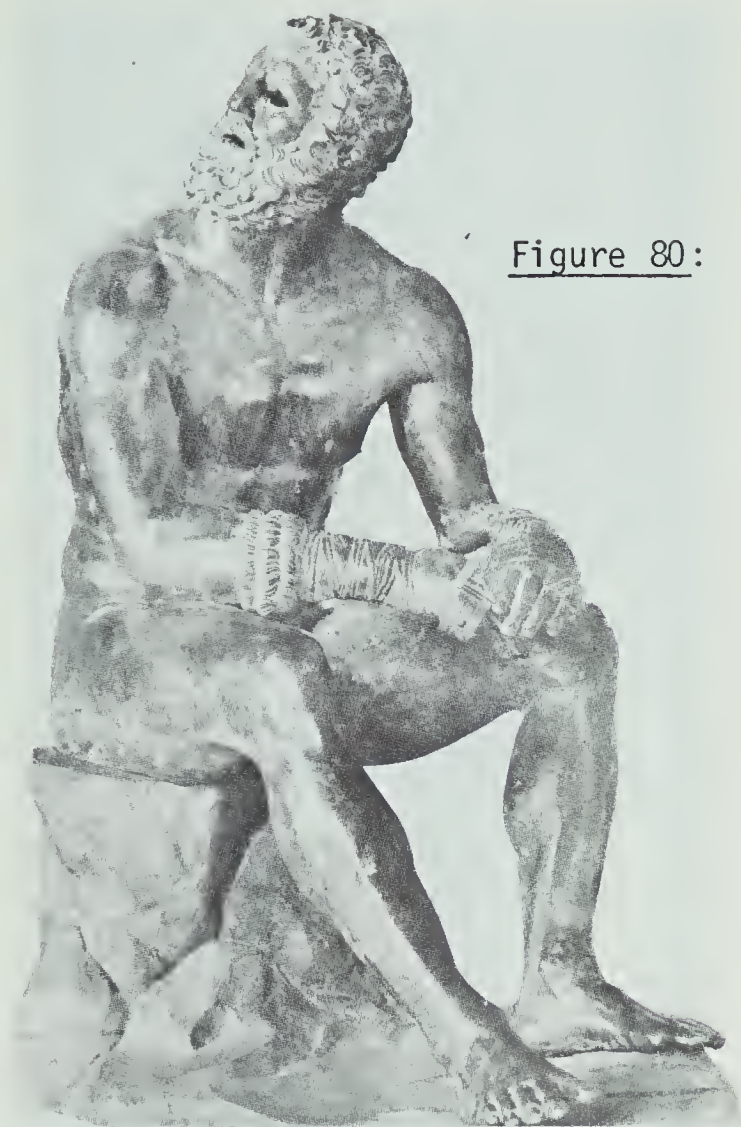


Figure 80: Bronze statue of a boxer from the first century B.C. The face is scarred, nose broken and ears are swollen - the results of a long and distinguished career. Note the caestus on the hand and forearm.



Figure 81: First century statue of a naked boxer wearing the caestus.



Figure 82:

Figure 83:



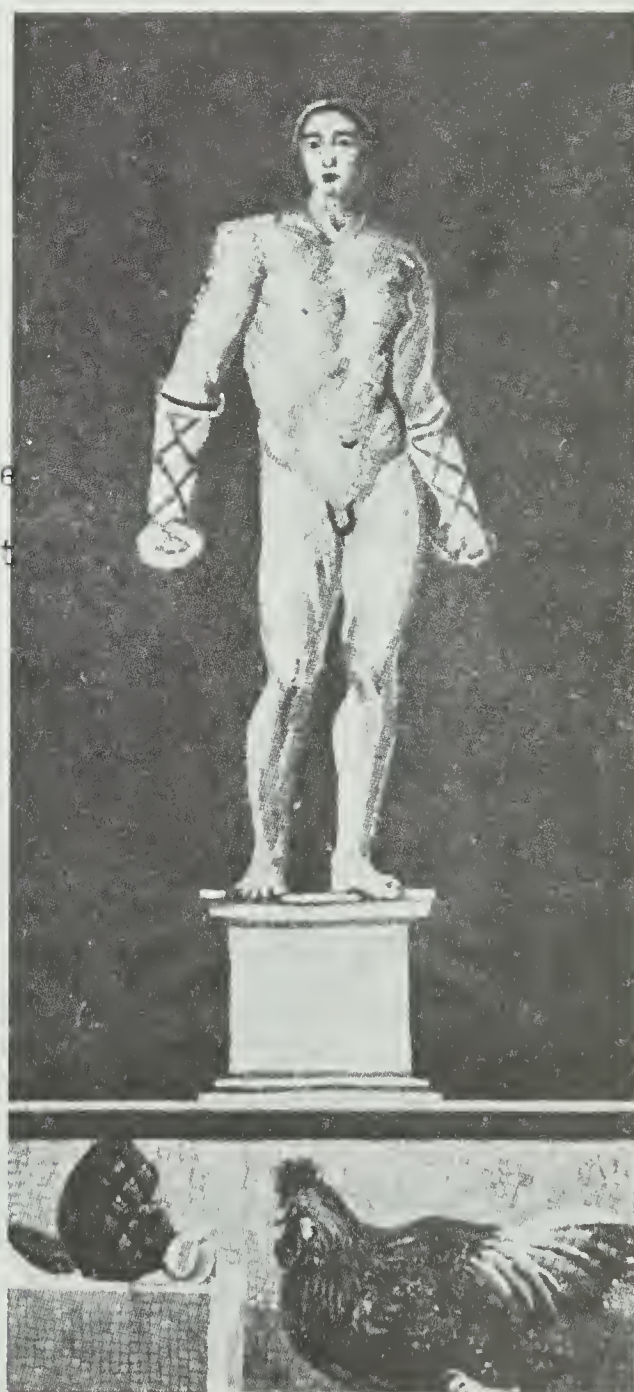
Figures 82 and 83:

Two boxers from the Caracalla mosaic.
Note the spikes projecting from the
caestus and the protective covering
which extends to the upper arm.



Figure 84: Bronze representation of the Roman caestus.

Figure 85: A naked boxer, wearing the caestus is represented in this mosaic from the first century A.D.



which he knew would understand them perfectly.⁸³ Martial⁸⁴ speaks of the "well-oiled", who "wrestle in the lists", and complains of wrestling masters who "waste precious oil". Suetonius⁸⁵ writes of a bitter feeling towards Nero after he had ordered a ship from Alexandria, with a cargo of sand, for the court wrestlers.

Wrestling and pancration contests are well illustrated on the various forms of archeological evidence. Two coins from the third century A.D., (Figs. 74, 75) show wrestlers engaged in competition, and the latter coin includes the prize for victory. A second century relief (Fig. 90) now in the Lateran Museum, illustrates a contest between two pancrationists, and although neither is wearing a caestus, they both appear to be aiming blows at the opponent's head. An interesting feature of both athletes is the hair, which is raised and tied at the top, in characteristic fashion. To the right of this pair is another athlete who has just been awarded a prize for victory.

From an examination of the literary and archeological evidence, there can be no doubt that the games of the Circus and the arena were the most popular forms of entertainment in ancient Rome. However, a more searching study of the evidence has revealed that the agones, far from remaining a mere adjunct of the other Roman games, became the pattern of some of the most celebrated festivals to be held during the Empire. As Arnold⁸⁶ points out, the Romans probably never acquired the feeling for the agones that would have inspired a Pindaric Ode, but they unquestionably had a genuine appreciation

⁸³Quintilian, ix.ix.8., as cited in Woody, op. cit., p. 670.

⁸⁴Martial, op. cit., iii.58, iv.19.

⁸⁵Suetonius, Nero. 45, op. cit.

⁸⁶Arnold, loc. cit., p. 245.

for them as spectacles, and cultivated them more and more as time went on.

It was pointed out earlier that the complaints of the ancient writers did not give an indication of the views of the Roman populace, but rather the views of an educated, upper-class minority. Indeed, there is some evidence, at least in the later Empire, that these protests represented the opinion of a very small minority. Robinson⁸⁷ points out that although Galen attacked athletics as a profession, his complaints were no more than an exaggerated, sarcastic account of current tendencies in athletics. These complaints, she adds, were the results of a quarrel about different methods of training, and Galen, as a competent doctor, was irritated by the medial brashness of athletic coaches who imposed on their students unnatural rules for living.

For further evidence, one need only refer to the victorious athletes represented on coins of both the Republic and the Empire, the victorious athletes pictured on the floor of the baths of Caracalla, and the numerous archeological and inscriptional testimonia to agones. Indeed, Greek athletics were not as unpopular in ancient Rome as most literary authorities would have us suppose.

⁸⁷Robinson, op. cit., p. 169.



Figure 86: First century relief showing a fight between a youth and an elderly boxer.



Figure 87: Second century relief of two boxers engaged in competition.



Figure 88: Second century mosaic of a boxing contest. The prizes for victory are also evident.



Figure 89: First century terra-cotta relief showing naked athletes. On the left are boxers, and on the right an athlete is shown using a strigil.



Figure 90: A second century relief depicting pancratium contests. On the right an athlete is shown wearing the crown for victory. To his left is a musician.



Figure 91: A second century sarcophagus relief depicting contests between pancrationists and boxers.



Figure 92: A mosaic from Pompeii illustrating a wrestling contest.

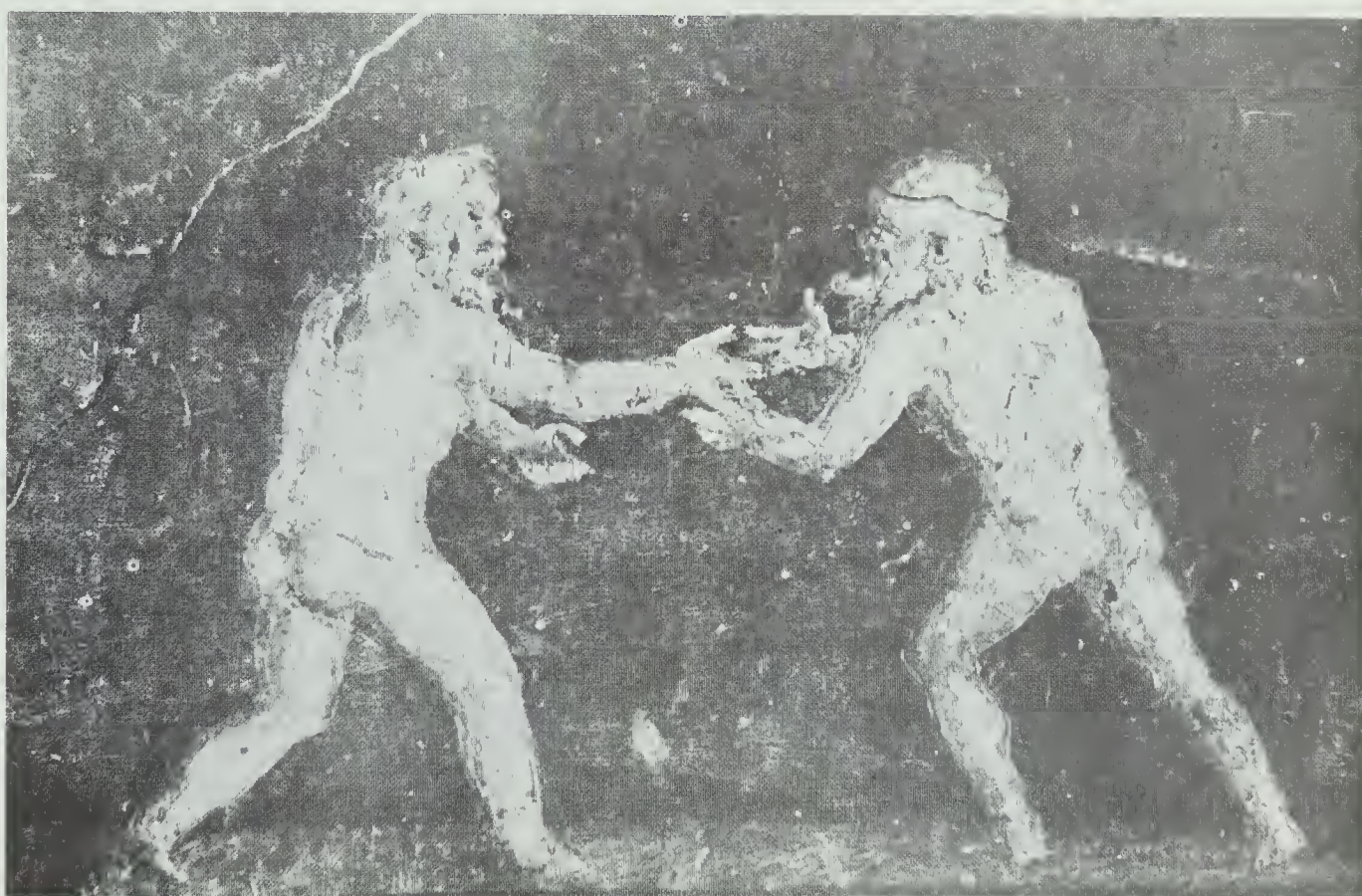


Figure 93: A wrestling match is represented in this wall painting from Pompeii.



Figure 94: Head of a boxer from the Caracalla mosaic. Note the way the hair is drawn back and tied behind the head.



Figure 95: A group of athletes at Nicea are shown on a coin, minted during the reign of Commodus.

CHAPTER V

THE BATHS AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE

What could be worse than Nero?
What could be better than the baths of Nero?¹

McIntosh² argues that if a survey of recreation in Rome was confined to the activities of the circus and arena, Gibbon's dictum that "the most eminent of the Greeks were actors, the Romans were merely spectators," would ring true. However, there was another side to Roman life, and the many *thermae* that were situated throughout the Empire, together with the activities that were practised on the Campus Martius, made provision for a wide range of physical activities.

As part of the Greek way of life which the Romans had adopted in the second century B.C., it was thought wise to take exercise before a heavy meal. As a result, the routine developed among the upper classes both in Rome and in the country of exercising - leisurely or strenuously, according to age and inclination - in the early afternoon, stripped and oiled and, after exercise, of bathing.³ Prior to this time, the Romans bathed only for health and cleanliness, not for luxury. According to Seneca⁴, the ancient

¹Martial, op. cit., vii.34.

²McIntosh, op. cit., p. 45.

³Balsdon, J.P.V.D., Life and Leisure in Ancient Rome, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 26.

⁴Seneca, Epistulae Morales, op. cit., Lxxxvi.12.

Romans only took a bath on market days, and contented themselves with the more partial ablutions in the meantime. The room set apart for this purpose was called latrina, and was placed near the kitchen, so that warm water might be easily procured.⁵ As a public bathing establishment, the Tiber alone sufficed at first, but when the growing city was supplied by aqueducts with more abundant water, cold swimming pools (piscine) were built.⁶

It is not recorded at what precise period the use of the warm bath was first introduced among the Romans. We learn from Seneca⁷ that Scipio, in the third century B.C. had a warm bath in his villa at Liternum, which however, was of the simplest kind, consisting of a single chamber, just sufficient for the necessary purposes, and without any pretensions to luxury. "It was small and dark", he says, "after the manner of the ancients."⁸

By the end of the Republic both private and public baths (balnae) were in general use, and were already elaborate and luxurious, though less so than they were to become in the Empire. In the time of Cicero, every villa doubtless had its set of baths, with at least three rooms and sometimes an open swimming bath, as was the case of the House of the Silver Wedding at Pompeii.⁹ Although the public baths were originally intended for those who could not afford a private bathroom, by Cicero's time they had become the private property, or leasehold, of individuals who ran them for profit. The admission fee, however, was only a minor sum, and it was customary for those

⁵Peck, op. cit., p. 187.

⁶Woody, op. cit., p. 649.

⁷Seneca, loc. cit.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Fowler, op. cit., p. 275.

who sought the favour of the populace, to sometimes offer a day's bathing free of expense.¹⁰ Thus, according to Dio Cassius¹¹, Faustus, the son of Sulla, furnished warm baths and oil gratis to the populace for one day; and Augustus, on one occasion, furnished warm baths and barbers to the people for the same period gratuitously. On another occasion he offered similar privileges to both men and women for the period of one year.¹²

Most of the baths in Italian and provincial towns were run for profit, their freeholds belonging either to private individuals or to a corporation. They were leased out to a conductor, who employed a balneator to run them. There is a graffito at Pompeii: "To let: for five years from August 13th next, on the estate of Iulia Felix, baths, shops, stalls and dining rooms."¹³ Besides public baths, others were built by private speculators who either worked at them themselves, or leased them out. There were one hundred and seventy balnae distributed throughout Rome in the time of Augustus; and by the end of the Empire close to one thousand. Similarly, in the towns of Italy and the western provinces, the number of balnae grew continually throughout the Empire, together with the general standard of luxury.¹⁴

The building of fine public baths early engaged the attention of the Roman Emperors. Seven palatial thermae¹⁵ were built under the Empire,

¹⁰Peck, loc. cit.

¹¹Dio Cassius, op. cit., xxxvii. 51.

¹²Peck, loc. cit.

¹³Balsdon, op. cit., p. 27.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Thermae meant properly warm springs or baths of warm water; but came to be applied to those magnificent edifices which grew up under the Empire in place of the simple balnae of the Republic. Peck, loc. cit.

the first by Agrippa in the Campus Martius, the second in the same part of Rome, near the Pantheon, by Nero. Titus' baths were near the Colosseum and Trajan's baths were situated on the lower slopes of the Esquiline. The baths of Caracalla were constructed beyond the Porta Capena, near the Via Appia and Diocletians' baths were built on the high ground north-east of Viminal. The last of the great thermae were those of Constantine, which were situated on the Quirinal.¹⁶

The thermae, properly speaking, were an adaptation of the Greek gymnasium or palaestra. According to Carcopino¹⁷, the primary feature of these establishments was the provision of every type of bath that ingenuity could devise: hot, cold, and hot-air baths, swimming baths and tub baths. Externally, the enormous complex was flanked by porticoes full of shops, which were crowded with shopkeepers and their customers. Inside they enclosed gardens and promenades, stadia and rest rooms, gymnasia and rooms for massage, even libraries and museums. In fact, the great imperial thermae offered the Romans a microcosm of many of the things that make life attractive.¹⁸

Such luxurious amusement places were built by the Emperors partly from a desire to perpetuate their own memory, and partly to humour a turbulent people who did not easily forget the liberties their ancestors had once enjoyed. This was a revolutionary principle in keeping with the paternal role which the Empire had assumed toward the masses. Building baths, like

¹⁶Balsdon, loc. cit.

¹⁷Carcopino, op. cit., p.287.

¹⁸Ibid.

giving games and other popular entertainments, was a popular way to win public approval, and the more grandiose the baths, the greater the acclaim.¹⁹ In building the thermae the Emperors put personal hygiene on the daily agenda of Rome and within the reach of the humblest, and the fabulous decoration lavished on the baths made the exercise and care of the body a pleasure for all, a refreshment accessible even to the very poor.²⁰

In order to appease the public no expense was spared in building the imperial thermae, and their elaborate construction and decoration helped to compensate the poorer citizens for the tumble-down apartments in which they lived. Water, which was not supplied to private buildings above the ground floor, was abundant in the baths and was even filtered before it was supplied for use.²¹ Commenting on the elaborate decoration of these establishments, Seneca²² writes:

We think ourselves poor and mean if our walls are not resplendent with large and costly mirrors; if our marbles from Alexandria are not faced over on all sides with difficult patterns, arranged in many colours like paintings, if our vaulted ceilings are not bried in glass, if our swimming-pools are not lined with Thasian marble, once a rare and wonderful sight in any temple - pools into which we let down our bodies after they have been drained weak by abundant perspiration, and finally, if the water has not poured from silver spigots. I have so far been speaking of the ordinary bathing establishments, what shall I say when I come to those of the freedmen?

Many Romans spent a part of their day in conditions of great squalour and yet another part was enjoyed in the precincts of palatial

¹⁹Woody, op. cit., p. 651.

²⁰Carcopino, loc. cit.

²¹McIntosh, op. cit., p. 48.

²²Seneca, Epistulae Morales, op. cit., lxxxvi.4.

splendour. The ruins of many of the imperial thermae still remain²³ and, together with the many complementary literary allusions,²⁴ bear witness to the successful imperial policy of state aid for health and recreation.²⁵ As McIntosh²⁶ points out, the facilities provided by the government at Rome to keep the populace clean and contented, have hardly yet been surpassed in the modern world.

The Roman bathing establishments varied considerably in their layout, but in all of them the following essential elements were to be found:

The Apodyterium (Figs. 98, 99). or changing room. In this room the bathers removed their clothing, which was taken in charge by slaves known as capsarii, notorious in ancient times for their dishonesty. The apodyterium was a spacious chamber with stone seats along two sides of the wall, holes are still visible in the walls and probably mark the places where the pegs for the bathers' clothes were set.²⁷

The Frigidarium (Figs. 100, 102), an adjoining room which was probably too big to be completely roofed in, and which contained the cold plunge bath. It was also used as a dressing room, as there were compartments in the walls for clothes, and benches along the side for slaves, whose duty it was to watch the clothes. Those who found this bath too cold would use the open swimming pool

²³See Fig.

²⁴See Lindsay, Peter L. "Literary Evidence of Physical Education Among the Ancient Romans", unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, August 1967. p. 33-37.

²⁵McIntosh, loc. cit.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Peck, p. 190-191.

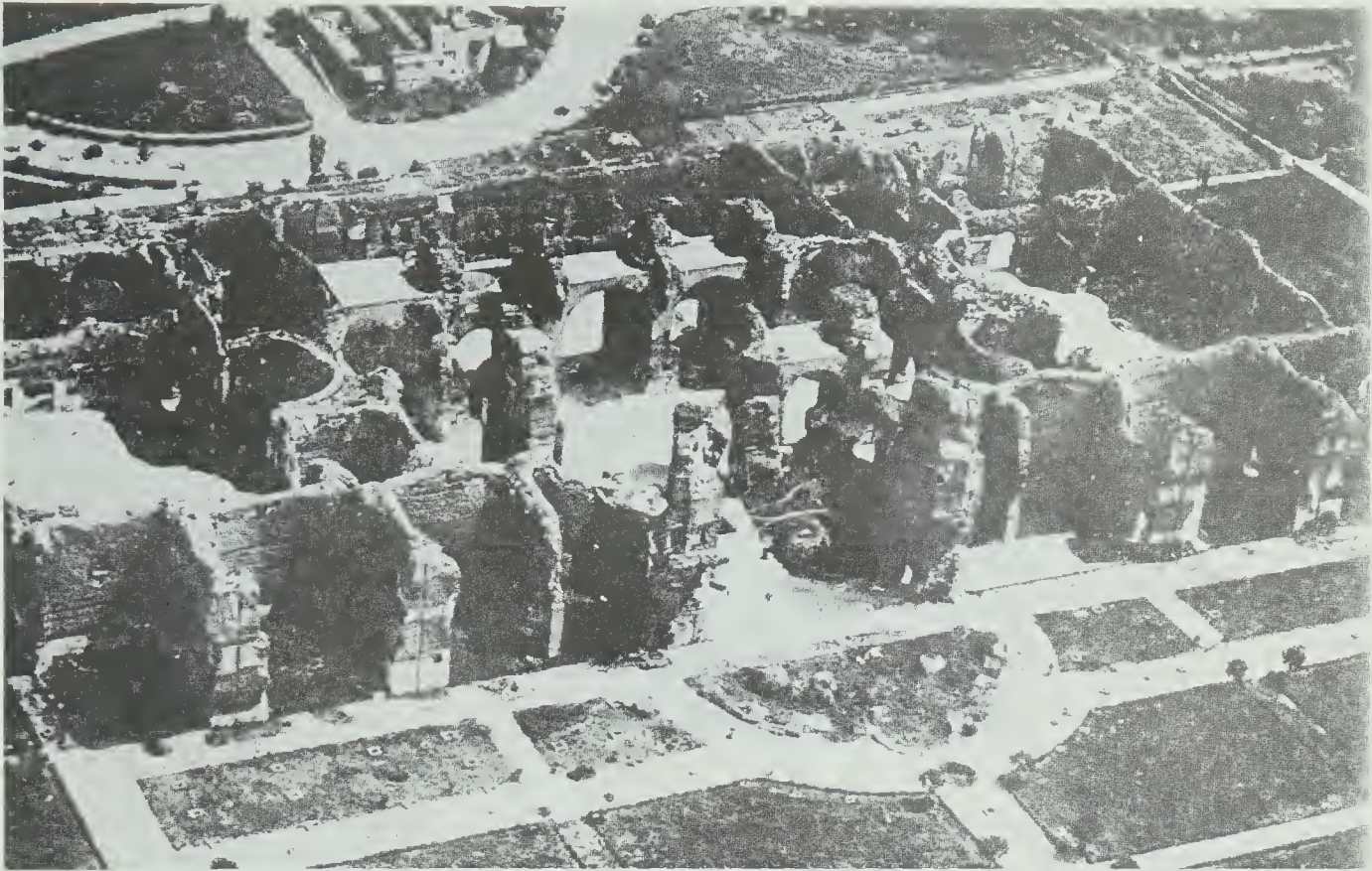


Figure 96: Air photograph of the remains of the Baths of Caracalla.



Figure 97: A nineteenth century reconstruction of the Baths of Caracalla.



Figure 98: Apodyterium of the Stabian Baths, Pompeii. Note the recesses in the walls for storing clothes.

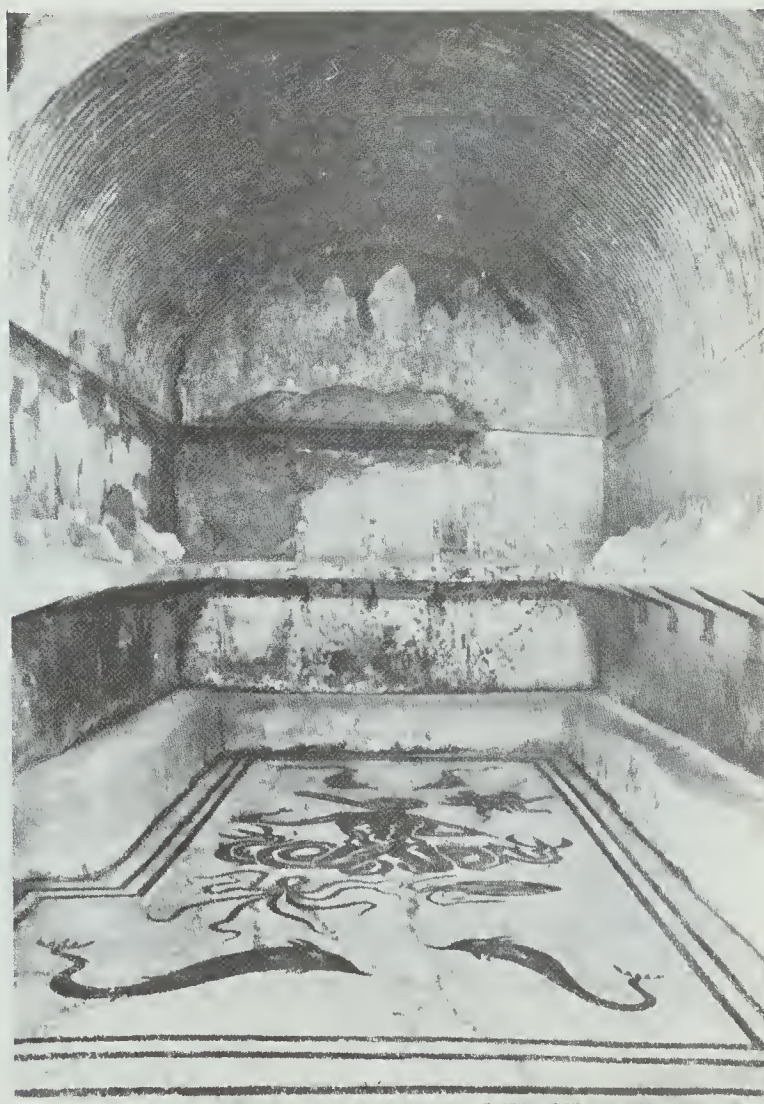


Figure 99: Apodyterium of the women's baths, Herculaneum.



Figure 100: Frigidarium of the Stabian Baths, Pompeii.

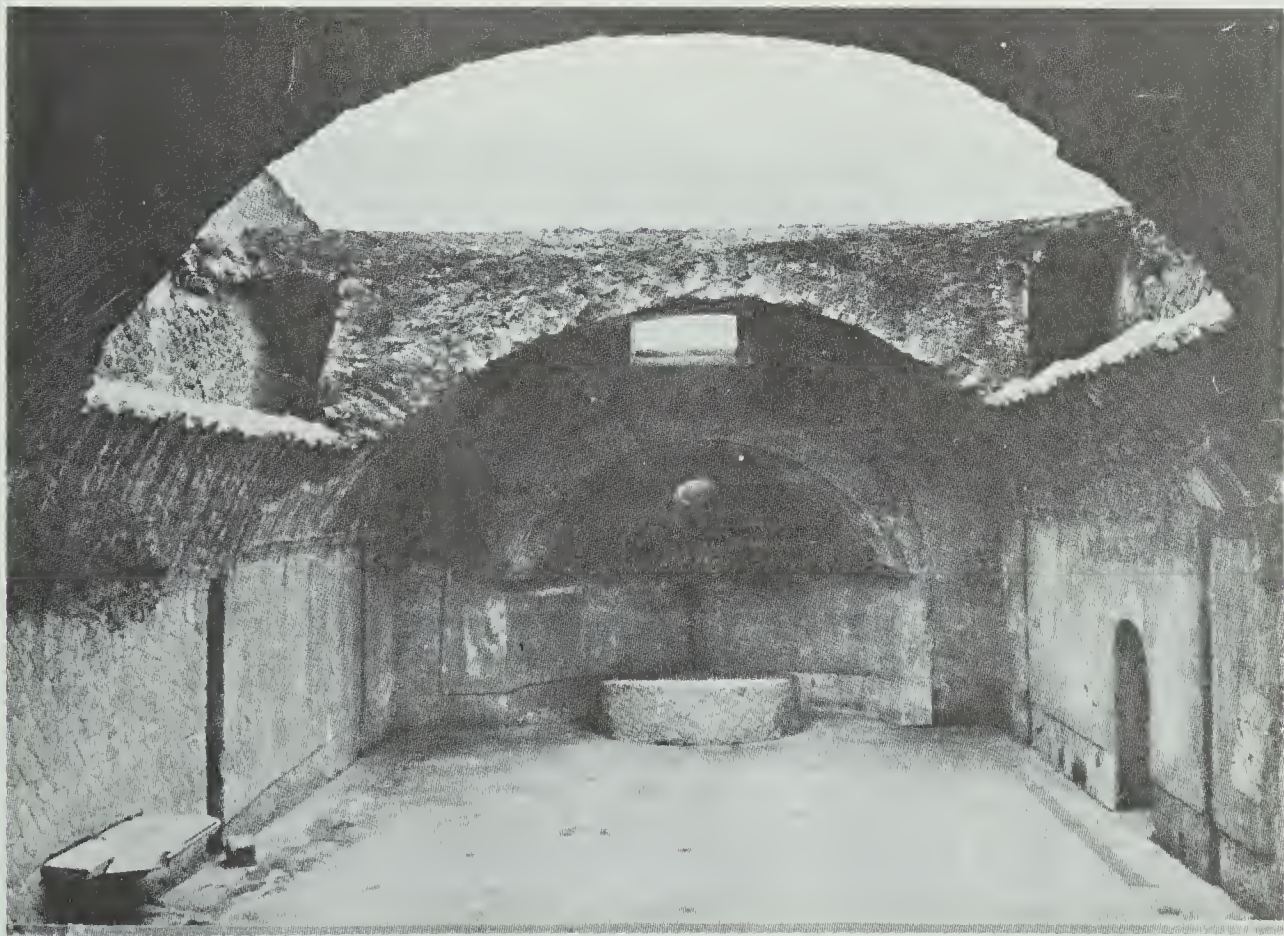


Figure 101: 'The caldarium of the men's baths, Herculaneum.



Figure 102:



Figure 103:

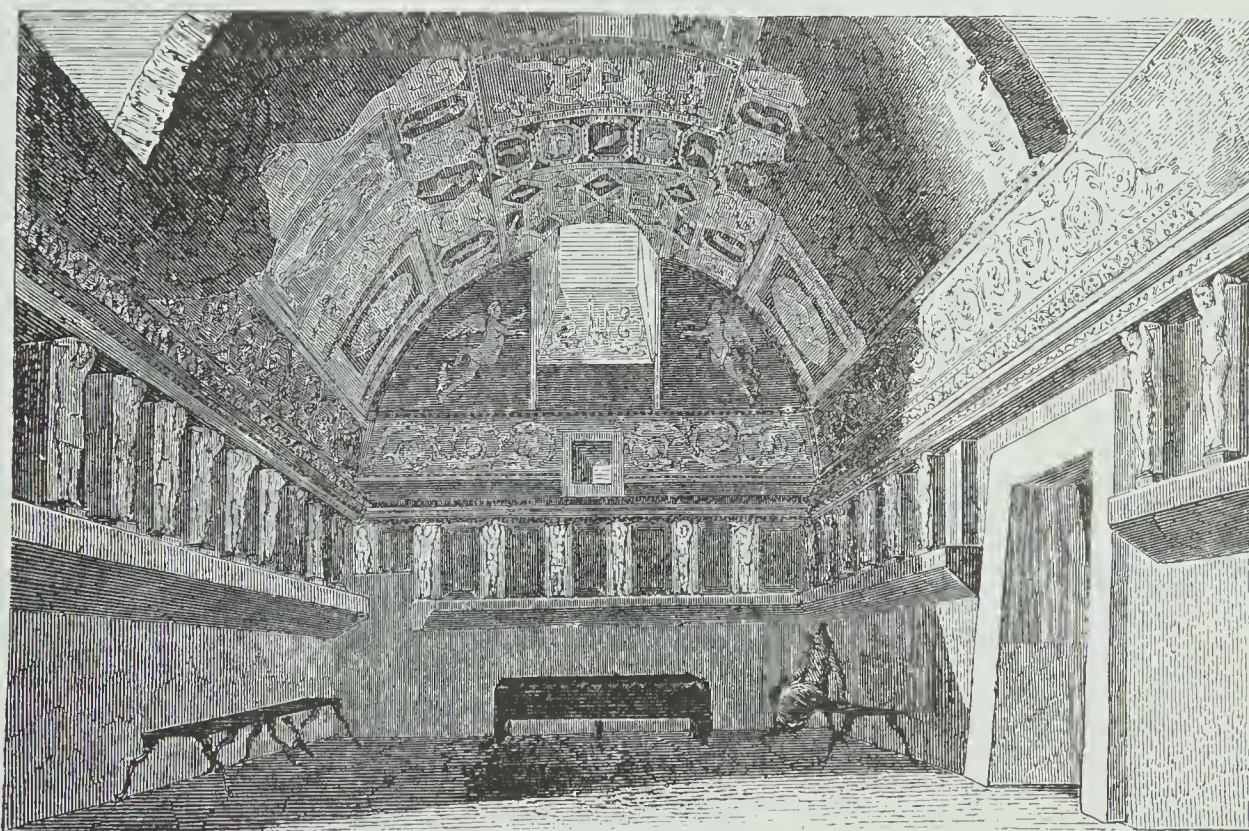


Figure 104:

Figures 102, 103 and 104: Illustrations of the Frigidarium, Caldarium and Tepidarium of the 'smaller' Baths, Pompeii.

in the court which was warmed by the sun. The bath in the chamber of the figidarium of the old Baths at Pompeii, is thirteen feet eight inches in diameter and about three feet nine inches deep.²⁸

The Tepidarium (Fig. 105), a transit room or passage with a marble floor which acclimatized bathers to the difference in temperature between the caldarium and the frigidarium.²⁹ The tepidarium did not contain water but was merely heated with warm air of an agreeable temperature in order to prepare the body for the great heat of the vapour and warm baths and, upon returning, to obviate the danger of too sudden transition to the open air. In the baths at Pompeii, this chamber served also as an apodyterium, for those who took the warm bath.³⁰

The Caldarium (Figs. 101, 103), was the room for the hot bath. It was the best lit room, and was provided with basins, tubs, and, in the large baths, with a swimming pool as well.³¹ It was situated directly above the furnace, and was heated by the vapour which circulated between its hollow walls. At one end of this hot room - which was rectangular, with one rounded end - was a large, shallow pool filled with hot water, in which several persons bathed at the one time. The back of the pool sloped inward, so that bathers could recline against it.

The water, which was piped into the bath from the hot water tank over the furnace, circulated through a metal heater, which kept it hot. The

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Paoli, op. cit., p. 223.

³⁰Peck, loc. cit.

³¹Paoli, loc. cit.

heater, semi-cylindrical in shape, was placed directly over a large hot-air chamber under the floor and opened into the bath. Since the bottom of the heater was a little lower than that of the bath, the water circulated from the bath into the heater, was warmed and returned. Near the top of the pool was an ever-flow pipe, and near the bottom there was an escape pipe, which could be opened to allow water to run out on the floor for scrubbing. In the rounded end of the room was a large basin of metal which probably contained cool water. For those who used the room as a sweat bath only there were benches along the wall.³²

In some baths, besides the caldarium, there was the Laconicum, a small heated room, which was used for the sweating bath. It had a dome on top, with a round opening which was closed by a bronze disc attached to a chain. The bather could regulate the heat by pulling the disc nearer or farther away from the opening.³³ To these rooms, was annexed an area which were used for bathing for gymnastics and ball games, (sphaeresterium), oiling the body (unctorium), and the removal of dust after exercising in the wrestling area. (districtorium). There were also large open-air swimming facilities (piscinae).³⁴

The arrangement of rooms in a bath-house, regardless of their number, depended on the method of heating. In early times the baths were heated by charcoal stoves, but later a furnace (hypocaust) was used for the double purpose of heating the hot water for the baths, and of spreading hot air into cavities deliberately left under the floor and in the walls.³⁵ The

³²Description taken from Johnson, op.cit., p. 250.

³³Paoli, loc. cit.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid, p. 226-227.

temperature of a room naturally depended on its nearness to the furnace. If there was a Laconicum, it was placed directly over the furnace, with the caldarium next to it and then the tepidarium. Since the frigidarium and apodyterium had no need of heat, they were farthest from the furnace and had no connection with it.³⁶

When the balnae were first instituted, they were only for the lower orders, who alone bathed in public; the people of wealth, as well as those who formed the equestrian and senatorial orders used private baths in their own houses. In the earlier ages of Roman history, a much greater delicacy was observed with respect to bathing, even among the men, than was usual among the Greeks: for, according to Valerius Maximus³⁷, it was considered indecent for a father to bathe in company with his son after he had attained the age of puberty. But virtue passed away as wealth increased. and when the thermae came into use, not only did men bathe together in numbers, but even men and women stripped and bathed together in the same bath.³⁸

By the time of the Empire everyone frequented the public baths, emperors, patricians, and plebians. The rich still had private baths of their own, but only in the public places could they find the amusement and diversions which attracted the rest of Rome. Only there could they hear the news day by day and felt that they were part of the life of the city. In the streets

³⁶Johnson, loc. cit.

³⁷Valerius, Maximus, op. cit., ii.i.7.

³⁸Peck, loc. cit., p. 187-188.

and elsewhere, a man's dress betrayed his social standing, but in the baths there was a spirit of equality which, while it did not offend the patrician, nevertheless contributed to the content and satisfaction of the plebian.³⁹

The public bathing establishments generally contained bathing facilities for both sexes, as appears to be the case at the baths of Pompeii, where the women's establishment was built on the usual plan, and was attached to the men's baths.⁴⁰ In the smaller towns, the same baths were open to men and women, but at different hours or on alternate days. In the Lu Metallii Vipascensis, the women had use of the eighth hour till the second hour of the night.⁴¹ During the Empire, at certain times, the piscinae were made available for both sexes to bathe together, but women who engaged in such activities had no claim to respectability, and it was highly unlikely, in spite of the growing licentiousness of the period, that any Roman lady of good family would use the baths unless they were reserved for her sex.⁴²

The baths were opened at sunrise and closed at sunset. The time usually assigned by the Romans for taking a bath was the eighth hour, although this varied according to the different seasons and classes. Where men and women used the same baths at different times, the women had the use of the baths in the morning. It appears, that time in the morning was also set aside for invalids and older people. The imperial thermae generally

³⁹Keyte, S.W., "Farthing Baths: Life in a Roman Public Bath", English Review, 44, (April, 1927), p. 482.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Peck, loc. cit.

⁴²Johnson, op. cit., p. 251.

remained open until dusk, but in some of the country towns they may have remained open after that time. The many lamps found in the baths at Pompeii indicate that these establishments may have remained open into the night.⁴³

Though the baths were available everywhere, they were not free. The cost of admission was, however, extremely small, a quadrans which was the smallest piece of coined money and was paid to the balneator. Juvenal⁴⁴, claims that children under the age of fourteen were admitted free at Rome, but not everywhere. In many instances endowment funds were provided, which permitted the discontinuance of fees entirely. Such as the case at Bononia; and at Suessa Senonum, where free baths were provided for everyone, even female slaves.⁴⁵

The method of bathing varied according to taste, age, and health, but the object was always to alternate between hot and cold baths. A cold bath, whether simply washing, or swimming and diving in the piscinae, was only taken after the body had been treated, and the pores opened from the hot bath or a series of vigorous exercises or ball games in the sphaeristerium. Less energetic people simply took a long sun bath before entering the cold water.⁴⁶

From numerous references it is clear that some type of ball play was the most common means of warming up before a bath. All but the smallest baths had a special ball-court (sphaeristerium) as an integral part of the

⁴³Balsdon, op. cit., p. 29.

⁴⁴Juvenal, op. cit., ii. 152.

⁴⁵Woody, op. cit., p. 652.

⁴⁶Paoli, op. cit., p. 224.



establishment. The court was apparently part open, and was designed so as to receive the afternoon sun, the time when exercise was normally taken. In a description of his villas at Laurentum, in the Tuscan hills, the younger Pliny⁴⁷ specifically mentions a sphaeristerium that was attached to his baths and which was large enough for several games to be played at once. Aside from the baths, games of ball were also played in the open air in the Campus Martius, and doubtless also by children in the streets.⁴⁸

Several of the more prominent figures in public life and in the world of letters were fond participants of ballgames. One player boasted in his epitaph that he had played ball with an Emperor.⁴⁹ Caesar and Anthony often devoted themselves to a game of ball " and Anthony always retired from the field defeated."⁵⁰ Stopping at Capva on the journey to Brundisium, Maecenas turned to a game of ball, but Virgil and Horace slept, because ball play was neither good for sore eyes nor for dispepsia.⁵¹ Even old men engaged in ball play for the sake of health. Spurrina, who was seventy-seven combatted the effects of old age by taking a long and strenuous workout with a ball before his bath.⁵²

That a ball game could draw a large crowd of spectators and inspire them to noisy outbursts is revealed by Seneca,⁵³ who complains of being

⁴⁷Pliny, Letters, op. cit., ii.xvii.11.

⁴⁸Woody, op. cit., p. 666.

⁴⁹Ibid, p. 665.

⁵⁰Plutarch, Moralia, The Future of the Romans, Trans. Frank Cole Babbitt et al. (Loeb Classical Library; London:William Heinemann Ltd., 1927).

⁵¹Horace, Satires, op. cit., i.5.

⁵²Pliny, Letters, op. cit., iii.i.8.

⁵³Seneca, Ep. op. cit., Lxxx.12.

interrupted in his studies by the loud roar from a crowd watching a ball game in a stadium close by. Galen's⁵⁴ treatise on the "Small Ball", and his defence of ball play for recreation and health, further testify to the extent and popularity of such exercises. He insisted that when performed correctly, ball games would bring every muscle of the body into play.

Although there are many literary references to the fact that ball games were played, the information about the balls and the games themselves is scanty, and not always clear. Martial⁵⁵ mentions the names of four types of ball, the pila paganica (the second largest ball which was stuffed with feathers), the pila trigonalis (a small hand-ball stuffed with hair, which was used for the games of trigon and harpastum), the follis (a large, air-filled ball, considered fit for old men to play with), and the harpasta (a small ball, filled with hair, but smaller than the trigonalis). Becker argues that there were really only three types of ball: the pila, a small ball, varying in hardness for different kinds of games; the follis, a large inflated balloon ball; and the paganica. On the other hand, Marquardt is of the opinion that there were as many as five different balls, varying in size and contents.⁵⁶

Whatever the number of balls, the simplest form of ball playing was a game of catch, with two or more persons participating. In a variation of this

⁵⁴Galen, Exercises with the Small Ball, cited in Robinson, op. cit., p. 185.

⁵⁵Martial, op. cit., xiv. 45.

⁵⁶Becker and Marquardt, as cited in Woody, op. cit., p. 667.

activity, a player juggled two or more balls in the air, throwing and catching them in turns with another player who was doing the same. The Latin expression for this activity appears to have been datatim ludere.⁵⁷ In a game resembling handball, a ball was struck with an open hand against a wall and after it had bounced on the ground, was again struck against the wall. The expression expulsim ludere, refers to striking the ball with the hand and is found just once in the literature. In a quotation from Varro,⁵⁸ he refers to boys in the Forum at Rome playing ball expulsim, in front of butcher's stalls. This game must have been very popular in Rome, for it appears to be the subject of an imperial legislation, which states:

..... if some people were playing a ball game and someone knocked the ball harder than usual and propelled it against the hand of a barber, so that a slave under the barber's hand had his throat cut by a jerk of the razor, that the Aquilian lies against whoever was to blame. Proculus says it is the barber; and certainly if he was shaving people in a place where people customarily played games or where many people passed by; but one might also reasonably say that a man who commits himself to a barber who has his chair in a⁵⁹ dangerous place has only himself to blame.

Amongst the more intricate kinds of ball play trigon, the game of three, appears to have been by far the most popular and common. The name itself appears to explain the nature of the game, where players apparently stood at the corners of an equilateral triangle and threw balls to each other.

⁵⁷ Leon, Harry, J., "Ball Playing at Rome", The Classical Bulletin, xxIII, 9. (June, 1947), p. 65.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ as cited in Crook, John., Law and Life of Rome, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 164.

Figure 105:



Figures 105 and 106: The 'Bikini Girls' of Rome. A fourth-century mosaic from Piazza Armerina, showing female athletes running, using dumb-bells, haltares, and playing games of ball.



Figure 106:

According to Leon⁶⁰, since there are more references to this game than any other type of ball game, especially as a preliminary to bathing, it is not unlikely that the expression pila ludere, when not otherwise qualified, refers to Trigon. This was the game that Trilmachio, in his red shirt, was playing in the baths with scorers and ball-boys.⁶¹ More balls than one were apparently used in the course of a game, although there is no evidence to prove that more than one ball was kept going simultaneously between the three players. Balls were apparently thrown in such a manner as to cause the other players to drop them. In order to do this, each player would try to mislead his opponents as to the direction in which he was about to throw the ball.⁶² A good player was a man of quick reactions and great agility. Either hand could evidently be used, and a left-handed catch was greatly admired.⁶³ The scorer evidently counted missed catches which dropped to the ground, so that the winner was the player with the smallest score.⁶⁴ That this method of scoring could be a noisy, continual process, is obvious from Seneca's⁶⁵ comments, and by the fact that when trigon was ever played in the baths, several of the others who were exercising would watch and add their verbal support.⁶⁶

A fresco found at the Baths of Titus (Fig. 111) shows four men, one

⁶⁰Leon, op. cit., p. 66.

⁶¹Petronius: Satyricon, Trans. Michael Heseltine, Loeb Classical Library, (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1938), 27.

⁶²Balsdon, op. cit., p. 166.

⁶³Martial, op. cit., xiv.46.

⁶⁴Petronius, loc. cit.

⁶⁵Seneca, op. cit., lvi.i.

⁶⁶Martial, op. cit., xii.lxxxii.3.

them elderly and with a beard, playing with balls. The older man is usually interpreted to be the trainer, though he may well be the scorer or even one of the players. Six balls are being used, but how they were manipulated is not apparent. The poses seem to indicate that the men are juggling the balls rather than throwing or striking them at each other in some form of competitive game. The fresco is commonly regarded as an illustration of trigon, but this must remain highly uncertain.⁶⁷ One fact that does appear certain is that trigon was a strenuous game, for Horace⁶⁸ cites it as an activity he avoids in the hot afternoons when he is weary.

The most spirited and strenuous of all ball games was harpastum. The game cannot with certainty be reconstructed, for the various references give no clear indication of it, other than it involved a vigorous, even violent scrimmage. Martial is the only writer to mention it specifically by name, and he indicates that it was a 'dusty' game, played with a small, compact ball, that it required much moving about, and served to develop the neck.⁶⁹ Scholarship has done its best to reconstruct the rules of the game, but in the absence of any surviving representation of it, little is to be gained by such speculation. The fullest description is to be found in Athenaeus⁷⁰ from whom we learn that at an earlier time it was called phaeninda, that it was violent and exhausting, involving much twisting and turning of the neck, passing of the ball from player to player, feinting in one direction and throwing in another, and knocking the ball from the opponent's hand. It appears to have been a team game and is possibly the

⁶⁷ Leon, loc. cit., p. 66.

⁶⁸ Horace, Satires, op. cit., i.6.

⁶⁹ as cited in Leon, op. cit., p. 66-67.

⁷⁰ Athenaeus, Deipnosophists, Trans. Charles B. Gulick, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1940), i.15.

activity that Galen⁷¹ is referring to when he speaks of the vigorous exertion required in certain ball games, especially those in which the players form sides, oppose each other, and scrimmage for the ball. It was perhaps a little more dangerous than Galen suggested, for in Justinian's Digest a legal question of damages is raised in connection with an injury to a boy slave whose leg was broken in a rough game of this sort.⁷²

Though it would appear that no sport equalled ball play in popularity, exercises with weights and the fencing post, running, jumping, wrestling and boxing, all added to the variety of warm-up activities prior to the bath. The Romans did not content themselves with a single bath of hot or cold water, instead they went through a series of baths in succession, in which the agency of air as well as water was applied. According to Peck⁷³, it is difficult to ascertain the precise order in which the course was usually taken, if indeed there was any general practice beyond the whim of the individual. It is certain, however, that it was a general custom to close the pores and brace the body after the excessive perspiration of the vapour bath, either by anointing, by pouring cold water over the head, or by plunging at once into the puscina or into a river. Musa, the physician of Augustus is said to have introduced this practice;⁷⁴ in other cases it was considered conducive to health to pour water over the head before the vapour bath, and cold water immediately after it, and at other times warm, tepid and cold water baths were taken in succession.⁷⁵

⁷¹Galen, loc. cit.

⁷²as cited in Leon, op. cit., p. 67.

⁷³op. cit., p. 189.

⁷⁴Pliny, op. cit., xxv.77.

⁷⁵Peck, loc. cit., for a discussion of swimming in ancient Rome, see Lindsay, op. cit., p. 188-190.



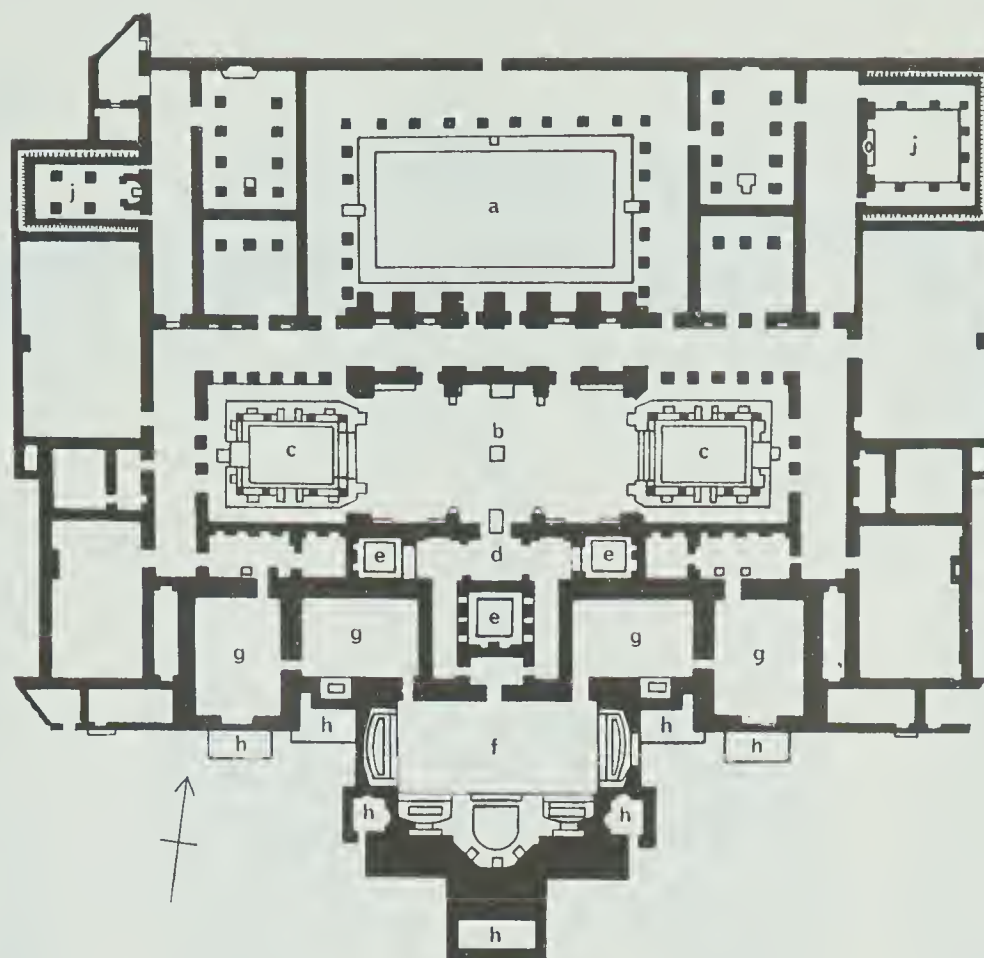


Figure 107: Hadrian's Baths, Leptis Magna. Open air swimming pool (a), frigidarium (b), plunge baths (c), tepidarium (d), smaller baths (e), caldarium (f), high-temperature rooms (g).

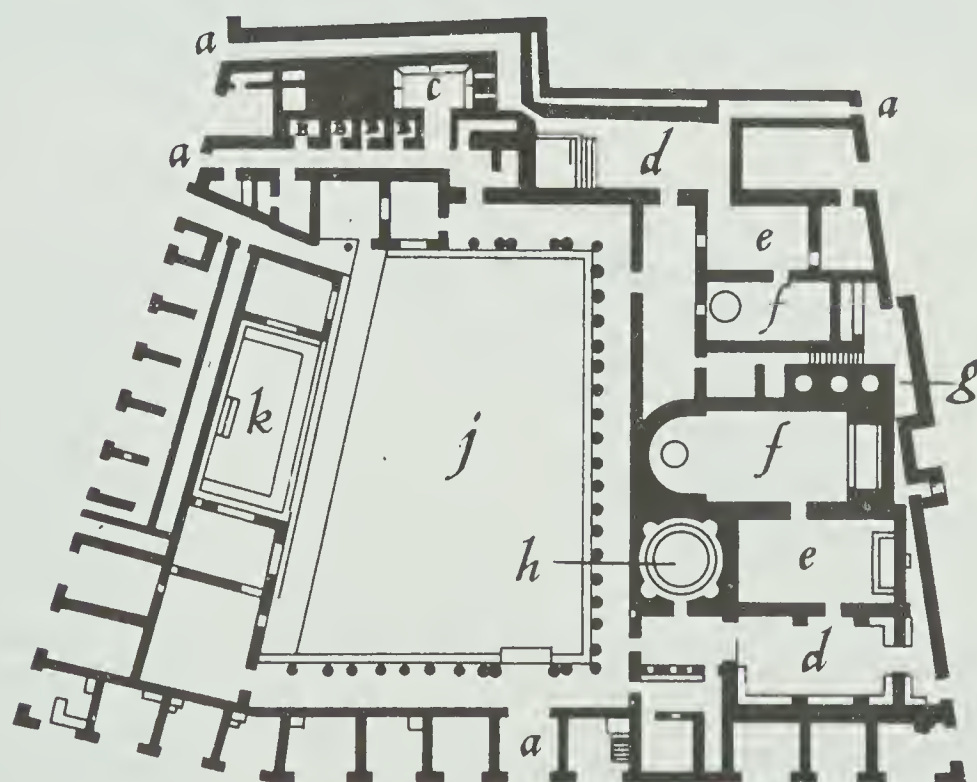
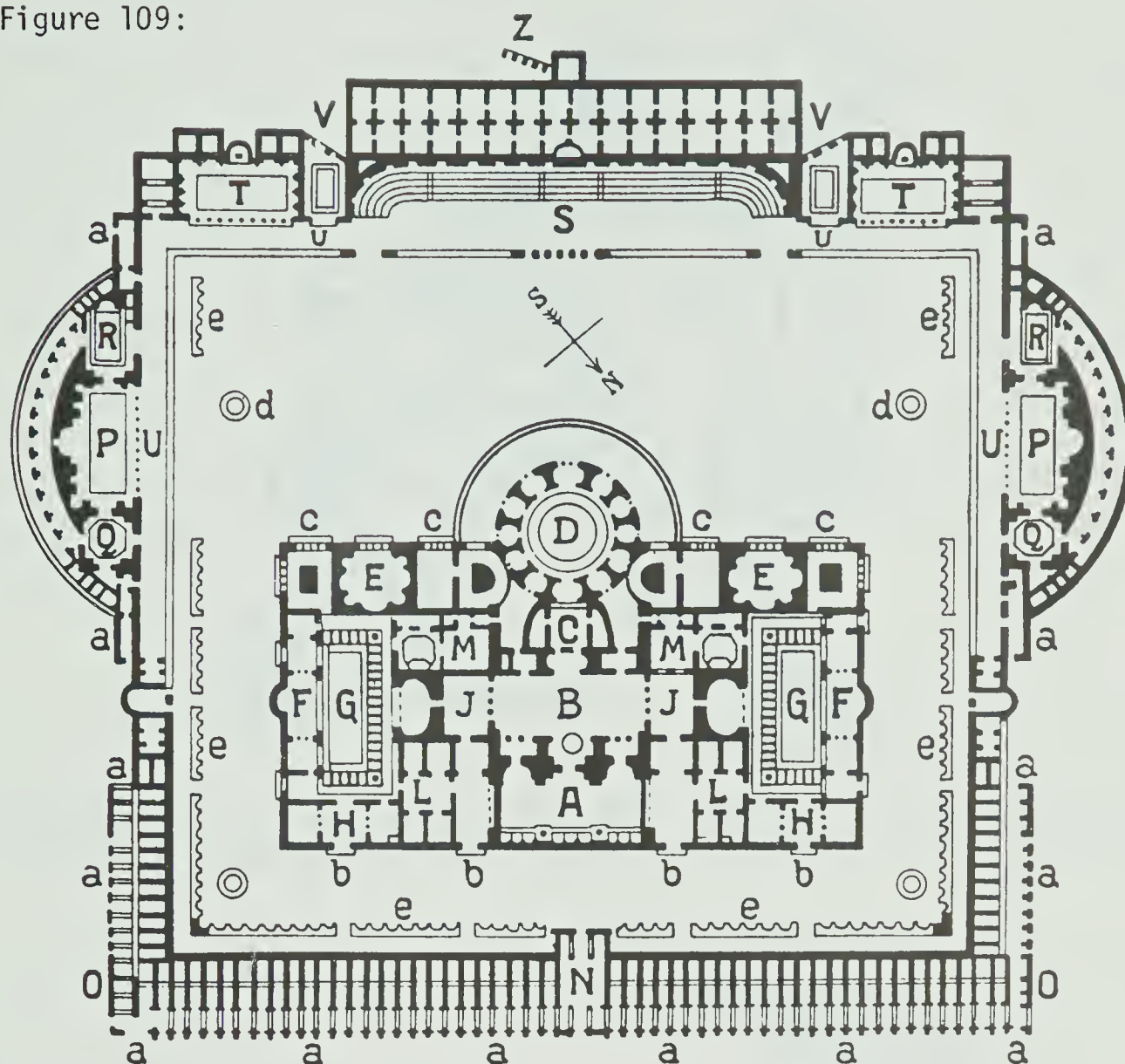


Figure 108: Stabian baths, Pompeii. (a) entrances, private baths (b), latrine (c), Apodyterium (d), Tepidarium (e), caldarium (f), Frigidarium (h), palaestra (j), and swimming pool (k).

Figure 109:



BATHS OF CARACALLA

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| A. | Frigidarium (Swimming Pool) | QQ. | Nymphaea |
| B. | Great Hall | RR. | Study Rooms |
| C. | Nymphaeum | S. | Steps to Portico |
| D. | Calidarium | TT. | Libraries |
| EE. | Lounges | UU. | Promenades |
| FF. | Lecture Halls | VV. | Cisterns |
| GG. | Palaestra | Z. | Aqueduct and Reservoir |
| HH. | Vestibules | | |
| JJ. | Courts | | |
| LL. | Dressing Rooms | aa. | Façade of External Enclosure |
| MM. | Steam Baths | bb. | Entrance to the Baths |
| N. | Main Entrance | cc. | Game and Sport Rooms |
| OO. | Shops | dd. | Fountains |
| PP. | Gymnasia | ee. | Podia of Colonnades |



Figure 110: An illustration of a Roman ball-game whereby a large ball is struck with the forearm.

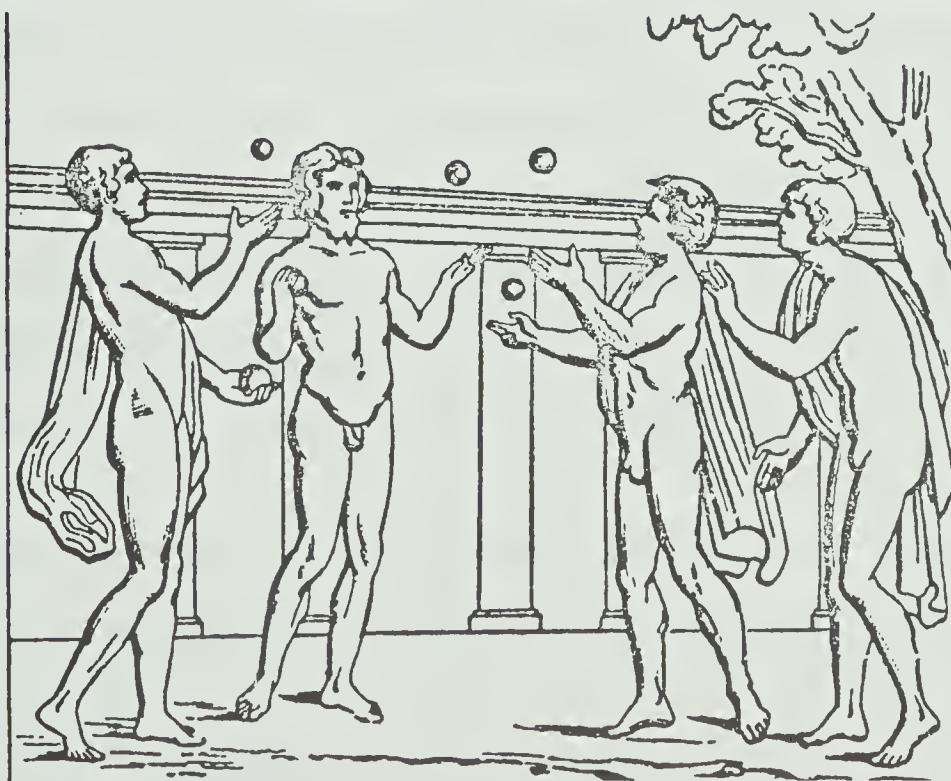


Figure 111: Illustration of a painting from the Baths of Titus, showing three men playing with the small ball. This painting has been interpolated as representing the game of trigon.

Bathers took a variety of objects with them to the baths: bottles of oil, strigils, soda, which took the place of soap, and various towels for drying the body, face and feet. The bather, except for the poorest, was accompanied by a train of slaves, who would attend to the oiling and strigiling while he bathed and rubbing him down afterwards. According to Martial⁷⁶, it was an indication that a man had inherited money when he took to coming to the baths with five well-groomed slaves. The elder Pliny even brought a secretary, so that he might dictate or be read to while the oiling and the rubbing down took place.⁷⁷

If a man were poor, he carried his own kit, and had to do his own oiling and strigiling, or resort to the assistance of special attendants, sordidus unctor, who could be hired for the purpose.⁷⁸ When they undressed, if they did not wish to leave their clothes to the mercy of thieves, they paid the balneator or the capsarius, a small fee for looking after them. There is a famous story of Hadrian who, shocked to see an old soldier rubbing his body against the bath wall (because he could not afford to pay an attendant to strigil him down), gave the man slaves for the purpose and money for their upkeep. The story spread and on another occasion he found a number of old men in the baths rubbing themselves against the wall. He disappointed them by the suggestion that they should strigil one another.⁷⁹

It is clear that the baths came to form a very important part in the lives of the Roman people. Carcopino⁸⁰ is convinced that the baths brought

⁷⁶Martial, op. cit., xii.70.

⁷⁷Pliny, Epigrams, op. cit., Lxi.ii.

⁷⁸Martial, op. cit., vii.xxxii.6.

⁷⁹Suetonius, D.Tit., viii.2., as cited in Balldon, op. cit., p. 30.

⁸⁰Carcopino, op. cit., p. 286.

immense benefit to the populace:

In their dazzling marble grandeur the thermae were not only the splendid 'Palace of Roman Water', but above all the palace of the Roman people. In them the Romans learned to admire physical cleanliness, useful sports, and culture, and thus for many generations they kept decadence at bay by returning to the ancient ideal which had inspired their past greatness, and which Juvenal since held before them as a boon to pray for a 'healthy mind in a healthy body.' ⁸¹

The facilities for physical recreation in Rome were lavish and they were in constant use, but the extensive and unprecedented urban development of Rome did not merely produce facilities. Rome was also the setting for a significant and original contribution to the theory and practice of physical conditioning.⁸² The Romans devised and classified exercises and activities in order to produce specific and foreseeable effects upon the body in ways that had never been explored before. The Romans saw the specific needs of their own environment and worked out exercises to meet them.⁸³ One area in which these principles were successfully applied was in the military training of recruits.

An account of recruit training has been handed down in the work of Vegetius⁸⁴, who described the army of the early empire when the heavy armed legionaries still formed the most important element. The training of the

⁸¹ Juvenal, op. cit., x.36.

⁸² McIntosh, op. cit., p. 48.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Vegetius, Military Science, Trans. Naphtali Lewis and Meyer Reinhold in Roman Civilization, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

Roman soldier was realistic and purposeful and Josephus, who fought against them, stated that the drawing of blood was the only circumstance that distinguished a field of battle from a field of exercise.⁸⁵

The Romans recognized the fact that fear, with resultant panic, was one of the greatest dangers to any army. In order to banish fear they relied on the confidence that comes with the consciousness of skill. For according to Vegetius,⁸⁶ knowledge of the game of war leads to boldness in conflict and no one ever feared to do a thing that he was confident he had learned to do well. Commenting on the physical requirements for enlistment, Vegetius⁸⁷ states:

Let, therefore, the youth who is to be chosen for martial tasks have observant eyes, hold his head up, have a broad chest, muscular shoulders, strong arms, long fingers, not too extended a waist measure, lean hams, and calves and feet not distended with superfluous flesh, but hard and knotted with muscles. Whenever you find these marks in the recruit, do not be troubled about his height. It is more useful for soldiers to be strong and brave than big.

In addition, before recruits from the city were permitted to begin training in arms they were to be taught to labor, to run long distances, to carry loads, to bear the sun and dust, to put up with short rations of country fare, and to alternate living for periods under the open sky and in tents.⁸⁸

⁸⁵as cited in McIntosh, op. cit., p. 49.

⁸⁶Vegetius, op. cit., i.1.

⁸⁷Ibid, i.6.

⁸⁸Stout, S.E., "Training Soldiers for the Roman Legion", Classical Journal, xvi, (April, 1921), p. 427.



Through persistent practice, the recruits were first trained to maintain the military marching pace. Summer marching was at the rate of twenty miles in five hours, and quick marching was at the rate of twenty-three miles in five hours. The pace required in summer marching was a little less than four miles per hour and, at this speed, soldiers were required to do at least three ten-mile marches every month. The correct pace was of fundamental importance both in cross-country marching and in maintaining the legion's formation in battle.⁸⁹ So that the troops might be able to carry arms and provisions, they were trained to march under weights of sixty Roman pounds. Whether this figure included the weight of armour and arms is not known.⁹⁰

Weapon training was carried out under instructors called campidoctors. A third or a quarter of the younger soldiers learned the use of the bow and arrow, but all were trained in the use of stones and leather balls, as well as in the handling of the sword, the shield, and the spear. The underlying principle of weapon training was 'weight-training'. The recruit had to learn his art with sword and shield twice the weight of those that he would use in active service; his spear, too, was heavier than his fighting weapon.⁹¹ Throwing the spear was given great prominence in training, both because of its employment in battle, and because it was considered an excellent exercise for training eye and muscle, as well as providing physical vigor.⁹² The foot soldier

⁸⁹McIntosh, loc. cit., p. 50.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Stout, op. cit., p. 428.

had to be able to throw the javelin even on the run, since the running attack gave an advantageous impetus to the onslaught. Stakes the height of men were set up, and the recruit would practice hurling the spear at the stake, while under the watchful eye of the campidoctor. After the cast of the javelin, the recruit unsheathed a club of twice the weight of the sword which he was to use in real warfare and, carrying a weighted shield, he practised attacking the stake from every angle.⁹³ His instructor watched every movement, and would point out weaknesses in style, which could lead to a return blow from an opponent.⁹⁴

Both recruits and experienced soldiers were required to practice mounting on horseback and dismounting until they could do it as a conditional reflex. In order to make continuous practice possible, a wooden horse was constructed, which was kept under cover during the winter months and set up on the Campus during the summer. The Roman recruit first practised mounting unarmed, then armed, then from the left or right side, and finally was required to mount and dismount armed with an unsheathed sword.⁹⁵

The army was never supposed to be idle and, in addition to the recruit training, it was considered that soldiers should know a trade and be hardened by natural labor. In peace time the legions were occupied upon public works, according to the ideas of their commanders. The great frontier lines and the walls in Britian, together with roads, bridges, canals, amphi-

⁹³Woody, op. cit., p. 638.

⁹⁴Stout, loc. cit.

⁹⁵McIntosh, loc. cit.

theatres, temples and harbours, attest the industry of the military engineers. Sometimes, the army was employed in agricultural tasks, such as planting vine-years, or in stamping out a plague of locusts, as occurred once in Syria.⁹⁶

In the first two centuries of the Empire, there were long periods during which no actual campaigning took place, and it was at such times that the conscientious and indolent legionary commanders showed their real characters. The good general was always able to find work for his soldiers which was useful for future expeditions, and at the same time served to keep the army in efficient training. The development of the province of Africa from one of the most backward to one of the most Romanized districts of the Empire was due to the uninterrupted settlement of legions in that country.⁹⁷ On the other hand, the effects of a slack commander are described by Tacitus⁹⁸ in his account of the state of the Eastern legions, "the legions moved from Syria", he says, "were slothful through a long period of peace and grumbled at the different camp fatigues". Whatever the activity that was devised for the legions, the underlying objective was to build up a reserve of strength and stamina, that would stand them in good stead in the thick of battle.

Closely related to the problems of recruiting and disciplining young men to the ways of military life was the development, during the Empire, of a number of youth organizations, called Iuvenes. These youth organizations, for free-born boys of the upper class, seem to have come into existence on the

⁹⁶Pliny, N.H. op. cit., xi. 106.

⁹⁷Parker, H.M.D., The Roman Legions, (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd., 1958), p. 225.

⁹⁸Tacitus, op. cit., xii.xxxv.1.



initiative of Augustus, who undertook it as part of his program to revive the traditional ideal of education as including the training of both body and mind for the service of the state.⁹⁹ He decided that the training of boys and youths in military exercises and sport was to be an important feature of Roman life. He considered that membership in such an organization was important as a preparation for the military service, which was insisted upon for all who sought political preferment.¹⁰⁰ Dio Cassius¹⁰¹ states his purpose in these terms:

This is the advice which I have for you with reference to the nobles and equites, with the addition of this all important suggestion, that while they are young they may go to common schools, and that when they reach adolescence they may turn to horsemanship and arms, with state-paid teachers to impart both forms of instruction. Thus from their youth they will have theoretical and practical knowledge of the duties they must perform on reaching manhood, and will be more serviceable to you in every field.

As far as is known, this was the only attempt, in ancient Rome, at making physical training a part of education.¹⁰²

In order to further encourage the activities and exercises of the youth, Augustus gave frequent exhibitions of their prowess at the games of the

⁹⁹Mohler, S.L. "The Luvenes and Roman Education", TAPA, Vol. lxviii, (1937) p. 442.

¹⁰⁰Taylor, Lily, Ross., "Severi Equitum Romanorum and Municipal Severi: A Study of Pre-Military Training Among the Romans", Journal of the Roman Studies, Vol. xiv., (1924), p. 158.

¹⁰¹Dio Cassius, op. cit., lli.xxvi.1.

¹⁰²Gardiner, op. cit., p. 125.

Circus and other public amusements. He also arranged to have noble boys and youths appear prominently in processions and ceremonies.¹⁰³

Little is known of the physical activities of the Iuvenes. Probably the Iuvenes were not much different from the Greek ephebi, although the membership was not as democratic. At Pompeii they had as their head-quarters a gymnasium and palaestra of the regular Greek type near the theatre in the oldest part of the city; while close to the Amphitheatre they had a gymnasium provided with elaborate baths and a club-house.¹⁰⁴ Graffiti from the great Palaestra at Pompeii show that teams of Iuvenes from one town engaged in competitions with teams from another.¹⁰⁵ In Rome and in many other Italian cities, the young men took part in a number of different festivals such as the ludi iuvenales and Iuvenalia in which, from Nero to Gordianus, the emperor himself frequently took part.¹⁰⁶

In Rome, aside from the baths, a popular venue for military training and recreation pursuits was the Campus Martius. The Campus included all the level ground between the Tiber and the Capitoline and Quirinal Hills. The northwestern portion of this plain, bounded on two sides by the river, was the old drill ground for soldiers and for centuries, the playground of Rome. It was described by Strabo¹⁰⁷ as, 'a vast area with unlimited space for driving chariots and riding and at the same time for all the people playing ball, trundling hoops and wrestling.' Those who exercised were mainly youths,

¹⁰³Taylor, op. cit., p. 159.

¹⁰⁴Gardiner, op. cit., p. 126.

¹⁰⁵Balsdon, op. cit., p. 163.

¹⁰⁶Suetonius, Nero. 2, Domitian, 4, op. cit.

¹⁰⁷Strabo, op. cit., v. 236.

although older men were to be seen, prodigious sights sometimes, like Marius when he was nearly seventy, 'practising weapon drill and riding every day among the young people,'¹⁰⁸ and the younger Cato, 'oiling himself and playing ball' after his failure to secure election to the consulship in 52 B.C.¹⁰⁹ At the end of their exercise, many of the younger men preferred a plunge in the neighbouring Tiber to one of the baths. Writing on this subject, Vegetius points out that the Romans selected the site of the Campus for its convenient location to the Tiber so that, "after their fighting exercises were finished the young people might wash off the sweat and dust and by hard swimming recover from the exhaustion of the races."¹¹⁰

Thus, while we are inclined to think of the great spectacles of the circus and amphitheatre as the chief amusements of the Romans, it must be remembered that the many *thermae* that were situated throughout the Empire, together with the variety of activities that were practised on the Campus Martius, made provision for a wide variety of physical exercises, and recreative activities.

¹⁰⁸Plutarch, Marius, 34. The Parallel Lives. Trans. Bernadette Perrin, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1919).

¹⁰⁹Balsdon, op. cit., p. 160.

¹¹⁰Vegetius, loc. cit. i.10.

CHAPTER VI

HUNTING, FISHING AND BOATING

Hunting and fishing were two of the more popular Roman pastimes. As a sport, hunting was taken over from the Greeks in the second century B.C., following the establishment of cultural contacts between these two nations. Prior to this time, the traditional Roman emphasis was upon the serious business of life, and any hunting that was done, was purely for practical purposes. According to Sallust, a man who spent his whole life engaged in hunting, was performing a "menial service" rather than taking "lawful exercise".¹ During the Empire, however, with public life making fewer demands, and with more leisure time becoming available to the citizens, hunting became a popular recreation for all, particularly in the large provinces such as Asia Minor, Africa and Spain, and later in Gaul and Germany, where the hunter was able to pursue a large variety of game.² An inscription from the period places hunting among the greatest pleasures of life: "to hunt, to bathe, to gamble, to laugh, that is life".³

Numerous literary accounts allude to the popularity of field sports in ancient Rome. Cicero⁴ refers to hunting, along with the activities of

¹Woody, op. cit., p. 673.

²Ginsburg, Michael, "Hunting Scenes on Roman Glass in the Rhineland", University of Nebraska Studies, xvi, (August, 1941), p. 9.

³CIL. VIII, 17938, Cited in Paoli, op. cit., p. 243.

⁴Cicero, De Officiis, op. cit., i. 29.

the Campus Martius, as a creditable form of amusement, and an agreeable occupation for the elderly.⁵ Horace⁶ portrays the thrill of hunting the boar, and his convincing portrait of country life and the joys of the chase further testifies to the hold that hunting had in the lives of the Romans.⁷ Martial⁸ likewise writes of such country pleasures as the spoils of the hunter's net, and snaring the leaping trout. Even Pliny the Younger, one of the more literary men of the Imperial Age, tells how he amused himself by hunting, though he did take his wax tablets along with him as well as his nets, so that if he caught nothing, he could at least take something home.⁹

The Roman hunting technique was primarily a matter of tracking down animals, pursuing them with dogs, and driving them into nets to be captured or killed. For the chase the hunters generally wore short tunics, close fitting caps to protect their heads from the sun, and high boots or leather bandages for the protection of the legs (fig. 127)¹⁰ In addition, the hunters carried various types of weapons. Included among these were the sling (funda), javelins for wounding from a distance (iacula), a small knife (cutter venatorius), and, for hunting boars and any other beasts that were likely to defend themselves vigorously when attacked, the venabulum. This was a type

⁵Cicero, De Sen. op. cit., xvi. 56.

⁶Horace, Odes, op. cit., I.1.

⁷Horace, Epodes, op. cit., ii.

⁸Martial, op. cit., BKI. 51.

⁹Pliny, Letters, op. cit., i.vi.1.

¹⁰Paoli, op. cit., p. 244.

of spear which had a long wooden handle and a broad iron point, with two smaller points at the base (see Fig. 112). Its main purpose was to keep the wounded animal at a distance from the hunter, and if need be, to finish it off.¹¹

Among the game which lured the hunter, the rabbit presented the simplest problem. This form of hunting was usually practised on foot, and while spears and arrows were seldom used, various kinds of nets were considered to be indispensable accessories. Although many breeds of hounds were used, the so-called Laconian dog was the usual companion of the rabbit hunter.¹² The Laconian had very little in common with the modern hunting dog. Its ears were short and upstanding, its body thick-set and sinewy, and it had a long snout for catching the game.¹³ The task of this particular breed during a rabbit-hunt was two-fold: first, to track down the game, then, to chase the game toward the nets. As a rule this dog was not expected to overtake and seize the rabbit, but rather to drive it into a net.¹⁴

Generally, three types of nets were used for the chase. The smallest net (casses), was used as a trap for enveloping the animal when caught. Its shape was similar to a women's hair net, and threaded through the outer edge was a heavy string, to which a stone was tied. When an animal was driven in to the net the string tightened, and the trap closed. In order to make the opening wider the hunter used sticks about thirty inches long, which were

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Oppian, *Cynegitica*, I.i.37., trans. A.W. Mair, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1946).

¹³Ginsburg, op. cit., p. 11.

¹⁴Ibid.

planted upright in the ground and supported the upper edge of the net.¹⁵

An excellent representation of this small-mesh trap can be seen in the mosaic from the villa at Piazza Armerina (Fig. 127), where two hunters are shown carrying a captured boar. The other two nets were rectangular, about forty to sixty inches in height, and were generally suspended vertically from sticks or trees with the lower edge fastened to the ground.¹⁶ Plagae were relatively wide-meshed nets that were used in places where the trap was not feasible, for instance an open terrain or an open road. These nets were stretched across an open area and passage on either side was blocked. Since smaller animals, such as rabbits, were unable to hurdle the nets they tried to slip through, and were either enveloped in the meshes, or killed by the hunter who was hidden close by. Younger or smaller rabbits were able to slip through the mesh, or were deliberately set free. Retia were wider nets, and were used to surround the area where the hunt was to be held. As a rule they were made in considerable lengths (60 to 150 feet) to prevent animals from escaping the area, and were used simultaneously with the trap net. Rabbits were chased along the retia until they finally ran into a trap net.¹⁷

On certain occasions the rabbit hunt with nets was combined with the so-called par force hunt, in the course of which the hunter did not wait for the game beside the net, but chased the rabbit on horseback. This technique was commonly practised in the provinces which had a regular landscape - in the plateaus of Asia Minor and particularly in Gaul. Such a hunt is shown on

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 11-12.

an engraved glass bowl (Fig. 116) which is presently at the Provincial Museum in Bonn. In the upper part of the bowl a hunter is seen, riding on a horse, about to strike a trapped rabbit with a spear. The lower part of the bowl shows two hounds which have driven a rabbit towards an outstretched net.¹⁸

A third method of rabbit-hunting involved the use of hounds only. For this activity, a special greyhound breed of dog called vertagus was used.¹⁹ When the rabbit was forced out of its retreat, the greyhound was not released at once; this was considered unsporting since the rabbit, bewildered by the sudden chase, might have become too easy a prey. The hunters were primarily interested in the spectacle of a contest between the rabbit and the dog. Only when the rabbit had covered a certain distance and was in full flight was the dog let off the leash. In order to avoid mistakes in tracking down the rabbits for this particular type of chase, special track dogs were taken along in addition to the greyhounds.²⁰ This type of hunt is perhaps suggested in the hunting mosaic from El Djem (Fig. 115) where in the middle scene a hunter is shown holding back two leashed greyhounds, while two tracking dogs are shown approaching a neat, circular thicket in which a rabbit is hiding. In the lower scene the hounds are shown, together with a hunter on horseback, in rapid pursuit.

The fleetness of the deer made hunting a difficult enterprise. Perhaps the oldest and simplest method of capturing a deer was that of pursuing the animal with dogs until, exhausted by the chase, it stood at bay and was

¹⁸Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁹Martial, op. cit., xiv.200.

²⁰Ginsburg, op. cit., p. 14.



Figure 112: Ivory relief depicting a group leaving for the hunt.

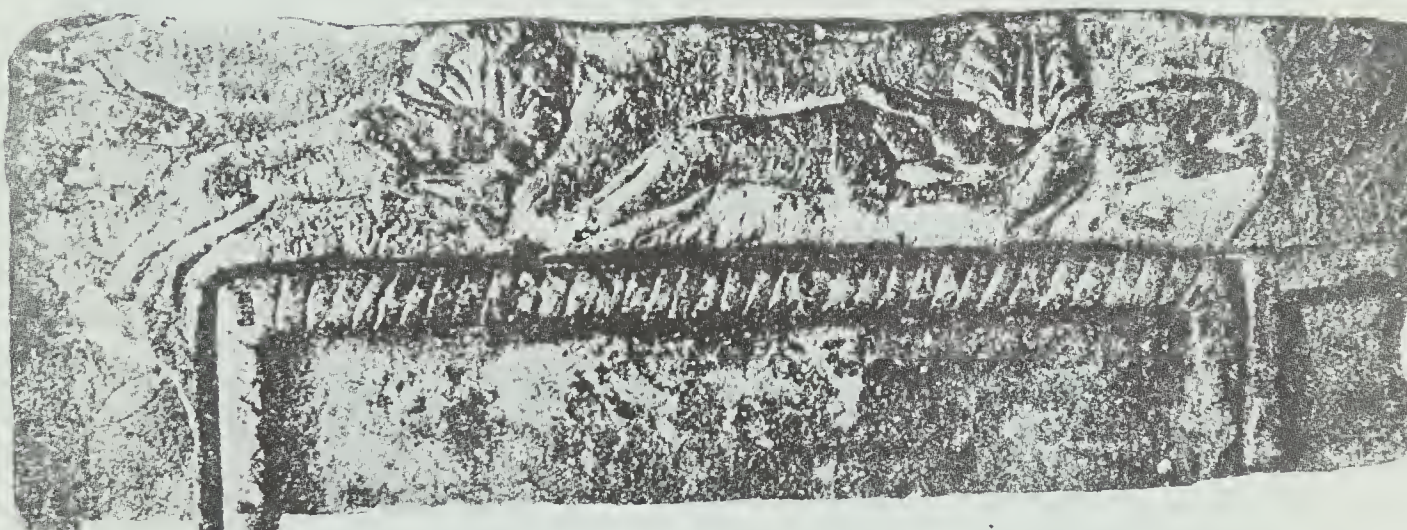


Figure 113:

Figures 113 and 114: Reliefs showing rabbits being driven by hounds towards the hunting nets.

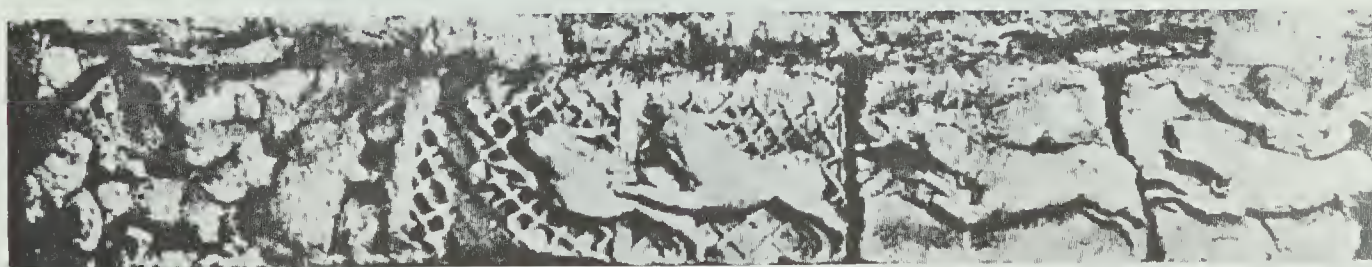


Figure 114:



Figure 115: Third century mosaic illustrating the hunt for the rabbit.

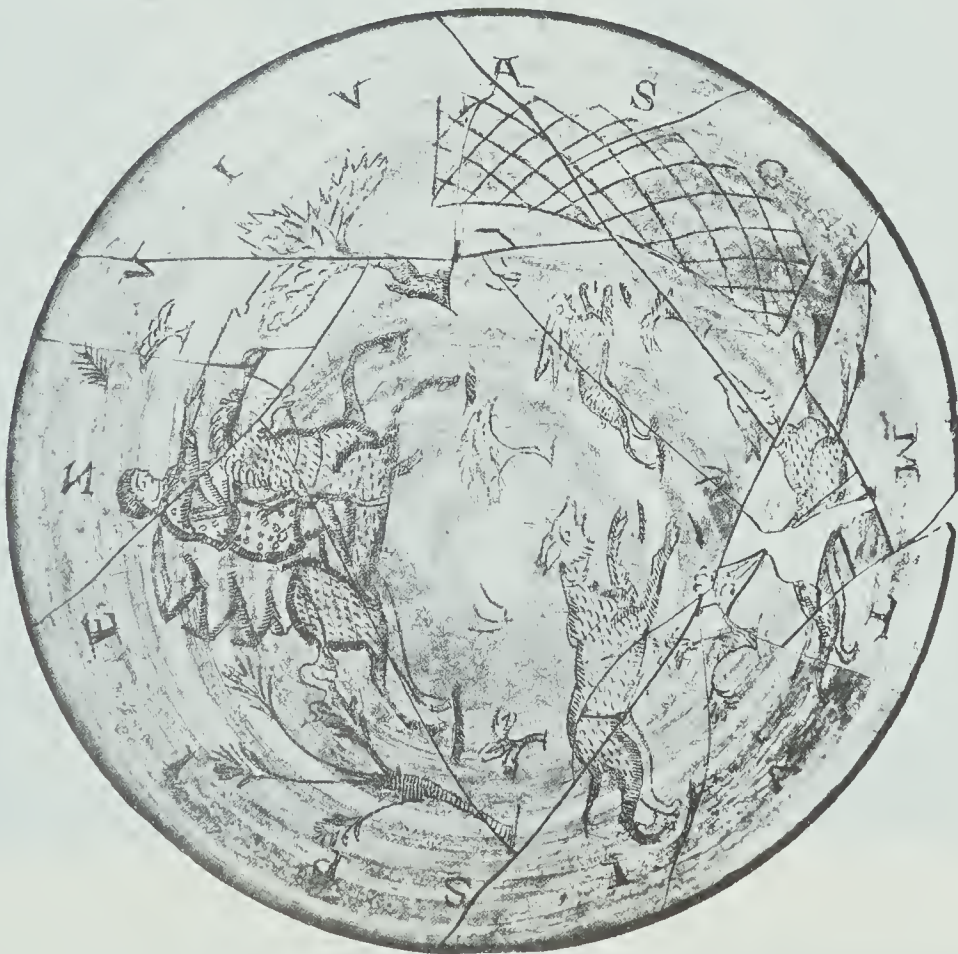


Figure 116: Rabbits are shown being driven towards nets in this fourth century glass engraved bowl.

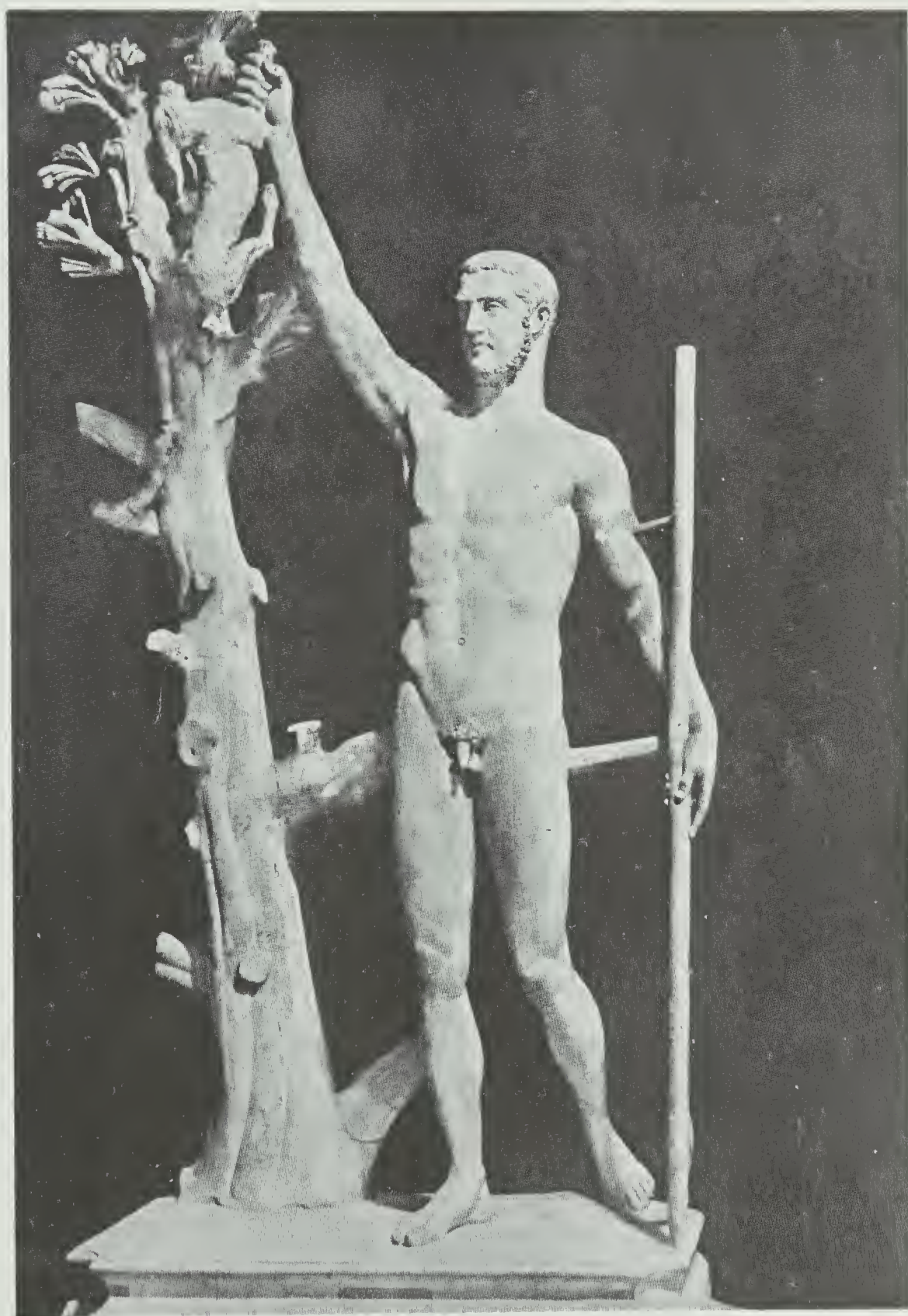


Figure 117: Second century statue showing a hunter holding a captured rabbit.

killed by the hunter who followed on foot or on horseback (Figs. 120, 121).²¹ Another method of taking deer was by means of traps which were set in the high-lands, or in leafy glens and forest clearings. These traps were quite intricately constructed. Wooden or metal pegs of varying lengths were attached to a crown or hoop made of flexible twigs. These pegs were driven through the ring to form a funnel-like trap, with the sharp ends pointing down. To the edge of the hoop was attached a rope noose, with a huge block of wood at the other end of the rope.²² When the deer stepped on the camouflaged hole with the ring trap lying under the foliage, its leg was caught by the nails. Although the deer was able to escape, it dragged the trap along, leaving the deep traces of the wooden block, through which the hunter could very easily track it down.²³

The boar hunt appears to have been the most celebrated of all hunting activities. Both literary and archeological records attest to the popularity and importance of capturing such a fierce animal. Several methods of hunting the wild boar have been described in the literature. Sometimes strong nets - similar in shape to the trap net used for rabbits - were used, in conjunction with hounds, that used to track down the animal and drive it towards the trap. Spears, stones, and arrows were projected at the boar from all sides, until it was either engulfed in the small-mesh net, or killed by one or many of the missiles.²⁴ This particular hunting technique is described by Ovid,²⁵ and is represented in the mosaic from the museum of Bardo (Fig. 122).

²¹Ibid, p. 15.

²²Butler, A.J., Sport in Classic Times, (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1930), p.

²³Ginsburg, op. cit., p. 15-16.

²⁴Butler, op. cit., p. 83-84.

²⁵Ovid, Metamorphoses, viii. Trans. F.J. Miller, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1914).

A second method involved the encounter between the boar and one or two hunters who were armed with heavy spears (Fig. 124, 125). The boar spear was a pike made of heavy wood, with a wide double blade of metal about sixteen inches long. Solid crossbars were usually attached to the head where the blade was set in.²⁶ If the boar succeeded in striking the spear out of the grasp of the hunter, the hunter could save himself only by throwing himself flat on the ground, face down, and clinging to the undergrowth. Since the animal's tusks were curved upward it could not strike a blow straight down on the hunter.²⁷ A third method, usually portrayed as representing the Emperor's hunt par excellence, involved the boar being attacked by a hunter on horseback (Fig. 126). Occasionally, the hunter was aided by companions, but in many of the representations (e.g. Fig. 124), the central motif is that of the direct duel between the hunter and the beast.²⁸

The techniques employed in the hunting of larger game varied according to whether the animals were to be killed, or whether they were to be captured and transported to Rome for exhibition. In order to kill a boar the Greeks frequently used poison,²⁹ and no doubt this method was also adopted by the Romans. Another common practice was to discover a retreat, whether in the thick of a forest or in a cave of rocks and to plant netting all round the lair, thus cutting off any way of escape.³⁰ A more dangerous method consisted

²⁶Ginsburg, op. cit., p. 18.

²⁷Ibid, p. 19.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Xenophon, Cyn. xi.ii. cited in Ginsburg, loc. cit., p. 22.

³⁰Butler, op. cit., p. 97.



Figure 118: Sculpture from the Vatican Museum showing a hunting dog attacking a deer.



Figure 119: First century coin showing a hunting dog attacking a deer.



Figure 120: Sarcophagus relief showing wild deer being driven towards a netted enclosure.



Figure 121: A third century mosaic showing the use of dogs for directing wild deer towards the nets.



Figure 122: A mosaic illustrating various scenes from the boar hunt.



Figure 123: In this third century mosaic, a boar is speared by a hunter on horseback.

Figure 124:



Figures 124 and 125: Two reliefs from sarcophagi depicting the hunt for wild boar. In both representations the use of the boar spear is evident.



Figure 125:



Figure 126: Relief from the Arch of Constantine showing the imperial hunt for the boar.



Figure 127: Fourth century mosaic from Piazza Armerina showing two hunters carrying a captured boar. The clothing worn for the hunt is clearly evident.

of confronting a boar with a spear. This resembled, to a large extent, the combat with a bear in the arena, one of the more popular features of the venationes.³¹ When the demand for bears to be used in the amphitheatre grew, the methods used were much more sophisticated. The hunters occasionally used traps camouflaged with foliage, but more frequently nets for catching the animal were employed. Oppian³² gives an account of how bears were taken alive in Armenia. When the bear had been tracked to its lair, nets were placed at the end of a run or alley, which was lined on one side with groups of men in ambush, and which was enclosed on the other side by a rope, to which was attached coloured ribbons and feathers (formide) - a very common device used by the ancient Romans for keeping an animal moving in a certain direction.³³ The bear was roused by the sound of a trumpet and, frightened by the noise of the hunting party, ran down the alley into the net, whereupon men hidden on either side pulled the cords and the mouth of the net was closed. If the bear succeeded in escaping, more nets were piled on to the animal and an attempt was made to lasso the beast.³⁴ Occasionally the net was used together with a trap which was shaped like an open cage. Some bait was placed inside the trap and a hunter standing, or hidden from view on the roof of the cage would let down a barred door as soon as the bear entered the trap.³⁵ (Fig. 128).

For other large game such as lions and leopards, the two chief means of capture were the pit and the net. The ordinary form of pit had in its

³¹Ginsburg, op. cit., p. 22.

³²Oppian, op. cit., Cyn. iv. 354-424.

³³Pellison, Animals for Show and Pleasure, op. cit., p. 144.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ginsburg, op. cit., p. 22-23.

centre a pillar of earth, stone, or wood, on the top of which was tied a lamb or goat, so fastened as to make it howl from pain. Round the outer edge of the pit was built a wall or wooden fence. The lion or leopard, attracted by the noises of the decoy, would leap this barrier and fall into the pit. A cage would then be let down into the pit, baited with a piece of meat, and the beast so caught would be hauled up.³⁶ Lions were also hunted by men on horseback armed with spear (Figs. 129, 130.) and were sometimes taken in strong nets. Illustrations of this mode of hunting may be seen in a curious drawing representing a lion standing with his fore-feet upon a large circular shield under which lies a fallen hunter (Fig. 130).

Among the more obscure techniques reported by the ancient writers is included the capture of leopards by drugging water-holes with wine,³⁷ and the raid of a tiger's cubs from their mother.³⁸ This latter technique appears to have been represented on the drawing of a marble relief found among the tombs of the Nasos (Fig. 131).³⁹ In the drawing a punt-like boat is depicted, connected by an open gang-way with a shore. Several mounted horsemen are seen riding before tigers, and one hunter is shown passing a small cub to another, who is galloping towards the gang-way.

In the larger captures needed for the Roman venationes, the driving of many beasts into a netted enclosure must have often been practised. Oppian⁴⁰ reports that in the region of the Euphrates, lions were taken in a curved line

³⁶Pellison, Animals for Show and Pleasure, op. cit., p. 142.

³⁷Oppian, op. cit., Cyn. iv. 320-353.

³⁸Pliny, N.H. op.cit., vii.xxv.66.

³⁹Butler, op. cit., p. 105.

⁴⁰Oppian, op. cit., Cyn.iv. 112-146.



Figure 128: A fourth century mosaic illustrating a method of capturing bears for the arena. Dogs are shown driving bears through a netted enclosure, towards a cage, on top of which stands an attendant ready to release the trap-door.



Figure 129: Mosaic of a lion hunt on horseback, from a building in Leptis Magna.



Figure 130: A drawing representing a lion standing with its fore-feet upon a large circular shield, under which lies a fallen hunter. Note the use of nets for this mode of capture.



Figure 131: A drawing of a marble relief from Nasos representing the capture of tiger cubs for transport to the arena.



Figure 132: Sarcophagus relief illustrating the imperial hunt for a lion.



Figure 133: A third century mosaic from Algeria showing the capture of wild beasts for the arena. The main theme is a drive for leopards and lions. Mounted horsemen have driven the beasts towards an area enclosed by nets and a ring of hunters on foot, each with a shield and carrying a flaming torch.

of nets, towards which they were driven by mounted hunters, who scared them with lighted torches and the rattling of shields. This method must have had almost universal application, and is shown on a mosaic from a Roman villa at Bonna, in Algeria (Fig. 133). The main theme is the representation of a drive of leopards and lions by mounted hunters, whose horses appear to be protected with trellises of wood or leather. The mounted horsemen have driven the beasts towards an area, enclosed by a long line of nets and bushes. A ring of hunters on foot, each with a shield, and carrying a flaming torch, are shown closing in, and endeavouring to prevent the escape of the beasts. Also shown is a two-wheeled cart with boxes for capturing the animals; the hunting of ostriches and antelopes, and a number of sheep which have been already carrelled. The use of the lasso is also illustrated, and a mounted hunter is shown tossing one at a wild ass.

Fishing

According to Lindsay⁴¹, fishing, like hunting, would be work rather than sport if carried out purely for a livelihood, but there is in the literature, sufficient mention of fishing for pleasure to warrant its inclusion as a sport.

Angling with a line and hook, trolling, netting and even fly-fishing after a rather primitive fashion, were practised by the ancient Romans. The rod and line appears to have been a popular method of fishing, and was often practised from a river bank, a boat (Figs. 134, 135, 136), or from rocks jutting into the sea (Figs. 134, 136, 138, 141). The rod, according to Butler, was constructed from a length of cornel wood, and was described as

⁴¹Lindsay, op. cit., p. 166.

being long, so as to keep the line well clear of the boat or rocks.⁴² The line was made of spun hemp, twisted horsehair, or of finely woven flax, and was dyed a blue-grey or a sea purple.⁴³ Hooks, some of which were two-barbed, were manufactured from iron or bronze and in some cases were loaded.⁴⁴ For bait, together with the more common devices, the fisherman made a paste of barley meal and goat's flesh⁴⁵, and, according to Aelian,⁴⁶ the use of an artificial fly was known and practised by the ancient Romans.

As far as methods were concerned, Oppian refers to the typical angler as sitting in a boat, or on the rocks beside the sea, "and with curving rods and deadly hooks he catches, at his ease, the fish of varied sheen; and joy is when he strikes home with barbs of bronze and sweeps through the air the writhing dancer of the sea".⁴⁷ This method of fishing can be seen on the fresco from Pompeii (Fig. 140), and the lamp from the British Museum (Fig. 136), where a fisherman is shown standing on rocks, wearing a loin cloth, and with a landing net in his hand; in the water another fisherman is shown wearing a hat, and holding a rod, together with a fish he has just caught.

In addition to the various rod and line techniques, hand-lining from a boat was also commonly practised (see Fig. 142).⁴⁸ To the hand line

⁴²Butler, op. cit., p. 135-139.

⁴³Aelian, On the Nature and Characteristics of Animals, xii.43. Trans. A.F. Schofield, (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1959).

⁴⁴Lindsay, op. cit., p. 167.

⁴⁵Butler, loc. cit.

⁴⁶Aelian, op. cit., xv.I.

⁴⁷Oppian, op. cit., Cyn. i.55.

⁴⁸Oppian, op. cit. Hal. iii.285.

was sometimes attached a number of hooks, which were trailed near the surface. Sometimes the line was sunk with a plummet of lead in order to catch the deeper-running fish.⁴⁹ Nets of all shapes and sizes were employed, however, the sportsman generally used a small net (iuculum), which was made so that when the fisherman drew the line in, the same cord which drew the net in closed it up, and prevented the fish from escaping while the net was still in the water.⁵⁰ A lamp from the British Museum (Fig.137) shows a fisherman standing in a boat, bending down and lowering a net into the sea. Another form of the sport was spearing fish with a three-pronged spear or trident. Aelian considered this to be a most manly form of sport, which required, as well as skill, great strength and endurance.⁵¹

The mosaic from Lepcis Magna (Fig. 141) provides an excellent illustration of the various methods of fishing that were employed by the ancient Romans. Leaning back for better purchase, a naked fisherman is shown hauling in a rather large net. In the background beyond a rocky islet a boy, up to his chest in water, is shown bringing up a net which is rimmed with floats. On a rock nearer the shore another fisherman kneels in an ungainly posture with body glistening and muscles bulging. In his left hand his rod is bent in a vivid arc, as he attempts to land a large fish with a scoop-like net, held in the other hand. The young fisherman is shown wearing a wide-rimmed 'sun-helmet', and a white cloth with black stripes is draped around his loins. Next to him an old fisherman, with white hair and white beard, is shown sitting quietly on the rock. He appears to be placing the bait on the

⁴⁹Butler, op. cit., p. 140.

⁵⁰Paoli, op.cit., p. 247.

⁵¹Aelian, op. cit., xii.43.

hook, while the remainder of the bait is in a copper jug which has been placed carefully on the rock.

Boating

The handling of boats was a matter of practical importance for the Romans and became also a means of recreation and amusement. From the ancient authors we learn of much rowing and sailing on the Lucrine Lake,⁵² in the Bay of Naples,⁵³ and in sea off Formiae.⁵⁴ For recreative purposes, according to Horace,⁵⁵ the poorer people hired boats, while the rich people possessed them. At one extreme such boats may have taken the form of a small rowing boat (Figs. 140, 143, 144, 145) or sail boat(Figs. 142, 146) or at the other extreme a trireme, or a palatial barge, such as those in which Caligula floated in comfort.⁵⁶ Pliny⁵⁷, refers to sailing as one of the constant diversions of the people at Hippo, in Africa, and one of the more exciting contests portrayed by Virgil is a boat race.⁵⁸

⁵²Martial, op. cit., iii.xxix.20.

⁵³Seneca, Ep. op. cit., Liii.i.5.

⁵⁴Martial, op. cit., iv. xxx.11.

⁵⁵Horace, op. cit., Ep.i.i.92.

⁵⁶Balsdon, op. cit., p. 221.

⁵⁷Pliny, Letters, op. cit., ix. 33.

⁵⁸Virgil, op. cit., v.114.



Figure 134: A third century mosaic illustrating the use of rod and line from a boat and from the shore. The manner in which the line is attached to the rod, suggests the use of 'runners'.

Figure 135: A third century mosaic from Algeria representing rod fishing from a boat.





Figure 136: In this first century oil lamp the fishermen in the boat holds a fish which he has just caught. Before him, on a rock, stands another fisherman with a net.



Figure 137: A first-century oil lamp from Pozzuoli showing a winged-cupid lowering a net into the sea. At the stern a steering-oar is evident.



Figure 138: An illustration of a Pompeian wall painting showing two fishermen on rocks one using a rod and line and the other a net.



Figure 139: Third century mosaic from Algeria representing the hand-line technique from a boat.

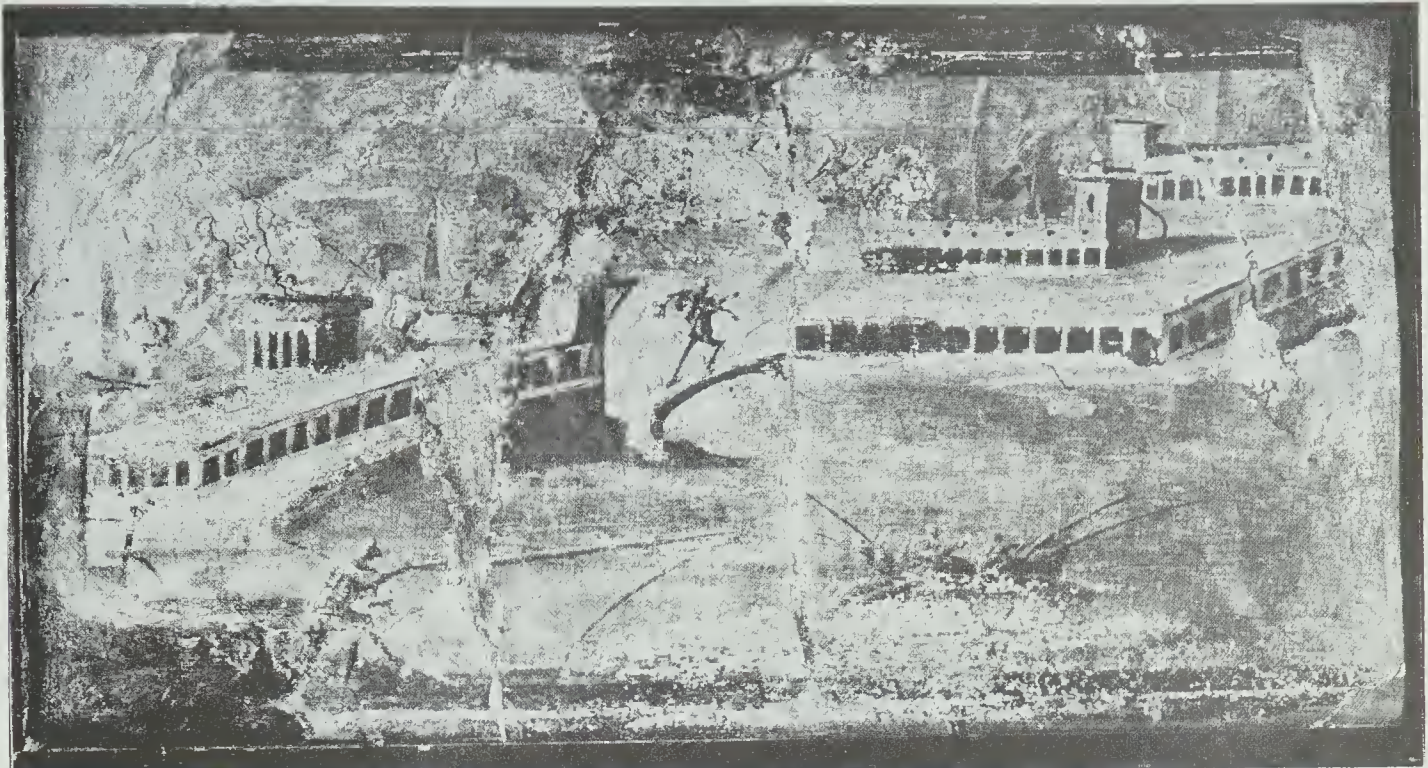


Figure 140: Wall painting of a fishing scene from Pompeii. In the foreground a fisherman is shown using a rod and line from rocks. Other fishermen are represented fishing with rod and line from a boat.



Figure 141: Second century mosaic from Leptis Magna depicting fishermen at the sea shore. One fisherman is shown using a scoop-like net to land a fish he has caught with a rod and line. Beside him is an old fisherman, who appears to be placing bait on a hook; the remainder of the bait is in a copper jug beside him.

Figure 142:



Figure 143:



Figure 144:



Figures 142, 143 and 144: Boating scenes from sarcophagi reliefs illustrating sailing and rowing techniques. In the lower two reliefs swimmers appear to be using the overarm stroke.



Figure 145: Second century wall painting from Rome, showing a boat which is rowed by two men, while a third steers.



Figure 146: Sarcophagus relief from the Lateran Museum, Rome. To the left a nude swimmer is shown diving from a sail-boat, while to the right a fisherman is represented with rod and line.



Figure 147: Boating scene from a third century mosaic.

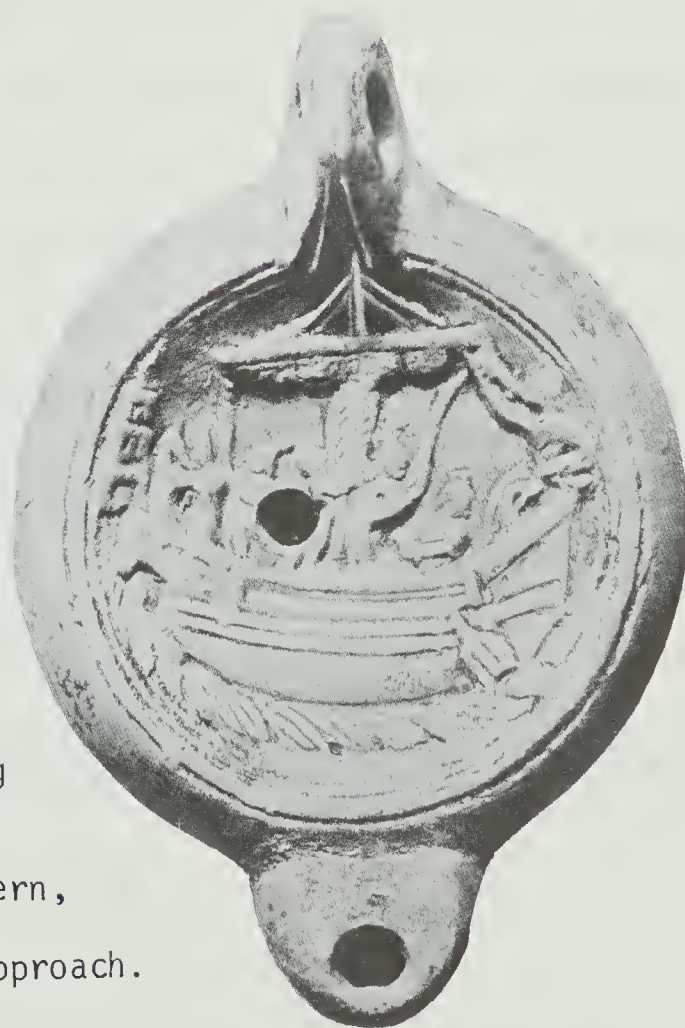


Figure 148: Roman lamp on which a ship is shown entering a harbour. Of the crew of six, one is seated high on the stern, blowing a trumpet to announce the ship's approach.

CHAPTER VII

CHILDREN'S GAMES AND ADULT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Roman children had a host of games, many of them common to other ancient lands and to primitive peoples the world over. A child's first toys were the tiny ones of the crepundia, and consisted of rag dolls and dolls of clay or wax. Generally the dolls were made of terra-cotta, and were frequently furnished with movable arms and legs. A number of these dolls, which are currently housed in the British Museum, have holes pierced in the tops of their heads, so that strings could be attached to the arms and legs.² As well as toys, Roman children kept pets which included dogs, cats, rabbits, sheep (See Fig.149) and birds of all types (Fig.150). The younger Pliny tells of M. Regulus, who lost a son and made a holocaust of the boy's pets around the funeral pyre. These included ponies, dogs, nightingales, parrots and blackbirds.³ Horace⁴ writes of pet mice that were trained to pull carriages, and if the cart were a little larger, quieter animals such as dogs, sheep and even birds were also used.⁵ A mosaic from Piazza Armerina (Fig.161), shows

¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 144.

²British Museum, A Guide to the Exhibition Illustrating Greek and Roman Life, (London: Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, 1920), p. 194-195.

³Pliny, Letters, op. cit., iv.ii.3.

⁴Horace, Satires, op. cit., ii.iii.247.

⁵Paoli, op. cit., p. 232.

a child standing in a toy chariot which is being drawn by a pair of wood pigeons.

Various forms of nut games, while not physically demanding, were among the more popular activities enjoyed by the Roman children. In fact, ("to take leave of nuts"), was a common expression to denote the end of childhood.⁶ One form of a nut game, represented on a sarcophagus relief from the Vatican Museum (Fig.153) involved the construction of a pyramidal "castle" with four nuts, three at the base and one at the top, which was then knocked down with a fifth nut, thrown from a designated distance.⁷ A variation of this game which is also represented on a sarcophagus relief (Fig.154) and called ludus castellorum, consisted of laying three nuts together on the ground and rolling a fourth so as to form a pyramid.⁸ In another game, several nuts were laid on the ground and a player tried to strike one or more of them by rolling nuts down an inclined board (Fig.153).⁹ A further game was played by drawing the Greek triangular letter, delta, upon the ground, and then sub-dividing it into several compartments by means of lines drawn parallel to the base. The object of the game was to toss nuts so that they rolled into the triangle and remained there. The winner was decided according to the compartment in which the nut fell and remained.¹⁰ A shooting game with nuts was also played, and involved the tossing of nuts from a distance into a narrow-necked vase.¹¹ Finally, the game of 'odd-or-even' (par impar) was also played with nuts and consisted of one player

⁶Woody, op. cit., p. 510

⁷Paoli, loc. cit.,

⁸Woody, loc. cit.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Lanciani, R., "Gambling and Cheating in Ancient Rome", North American Review, (July, 1892), p. 101.

¹¹Paoli, op. cit., p. 233.

guessing the number of nuts enclosed in the hand of the other.¹²

There was another variety of game derived from odd-or-even called micato, or morra, which is still popular in many parts of Italy today. In this game the two players simultaneously raised a number of fingers on the right hand, as one player called 'odd' or 'even', in order to correspond with the total.¹³ According to Cicero¹⁴, there was no greater testimony to a man's integrity than to say that he was one with whom you would be prepared to play micato in the dark.

Games played with knuckle-bones (small bones forming part of the ankle joint of cloven-footed animals) were also extremely common, and popular among the women as well as the children (Fig. 163). The marble painting found at Herculaneum (Fig. 165) shows two women engaged in knuckle-bones. This game was called pente litha, and involved the throwing of five knuckle-bones into the air and attempting to catch them on the back of the hand. If, as in the painting, some were dropped, the player had to pick up the fallen bones without spilling those still on the back of the hand.¹⁵ In a variation of this game, the player threw into the air those that remained on the back of the hand, quickly recovered the remaining ones, and then re-caught, in the palm of the hand, those thrown.¹⁶

According to Paoli¹⁷ it is reasonable to suppose that Greek children's games became common in ancient Rome. Certainly games with hoops were very

¹²Lindsay, op. cit., p. 205.

¹³Ibid, p. 206-207.

¹⁴Cicero, De. Off., op. cit., iii.77.

¹⁵British Museum, op.cit., p. 203.

¹⁶Lindsay, op. cit., p. 207.

¹⁷loc. cit.

popular, and mention of the Greek hoop, the trochus, is frequent enough to suggest its wide use as a common amusement for both women and children¹⁸ (see Fig. 156). The hoops, which varied in size, were propelled or steered by a curved or hooked stick called a clavis or key. Some were elaborately decorated with bells or rings around the circumference, so that a jingling sound was produced as the hoops were rolled.

A Greek game which must very likely have been introduced into Rome was the so-called Jar game. One boy, who remained seated, was the 'jar', and without getting up or leaving his place he had to catch another player. His companions came as near as they could without being caught, and were allowed to strike or pinch him. The boy who was caught had to take the place of the jar, and the game began again.¹⁹ A variation of this game is depicted in an illustrating of a Pompeian wall painting (Fig. 158). In this game a nail is driven into the ground and a piece of rope attached to it. As in the jar game, one of the players must hold the rope and suffer the blows of his companions until he succeeds in striking or catching one of them.²⁰ A fresco showing winged cupids playing with a rope (Fig. 157) may be illustrating the same game, but it is more likely a representation of some form of jumping activity. Other children activities also produced by the Greeks included top spinning, swinging on ropes, see-saw, kite-flying (Fig. 160) games of chance and Blind Man's Buff.²¹

¹⁸Carcopino, p. 283, cited in Lindsay, op. cit., p. 202.

¹⁹Paoli, loc. cit.

²⁰Schreiber, op. cit.,

²¹Paoli, loc. cit.

The less active diversions and pastimes of adults were often centred around activities conducive to gambling, for in all classes of Roman society gambling and gaming were favourite relaxations. According to Martial²² men of all modes of life were prepared to "stake a nut or two" at knuckle-bones, an activity that Cicero²³ considered to be the last pleasure left to old men. Gambling games were also recommended to women by Ovid,²⁴ who believed that a woman of questionable occupation could not hope to attract enviable clientele unless she was able to play the various games, and keep her head at the table.

Writing on the subject, Lanciani²⁵ states:

So intense was the love of the Roman for games of hazard, that wherever I have excavated the pavement of a portico, of a basilica, of a bath, or any flat surface accessible to the public, I have always found gaming tables engraved or scratched on the marble or stone slabs, for the amusement of idle men Gaming tables are especially abundant in barracks.... Sometimes when a camp was moved from place to place, the men would not hesitate to carry the heavy tables with their luggage.

Although knuckle-bones (tali) were used by children as toys, they were used by adults for gambling games. The surface of each of the four flat sides of the talus differed recognizably (plain, convex, concave and twisted) and each had a name and a number, though these were not marked or inscribed.²⁶

²²Martial, op. cit., iv.66.

²³Cicero, De Sen. op. cit., iv.

²⁴Ovid, ii. 203-208, cited in Balgdon, op. cit., p. 152.

²⁵Lanciani, op. cit., p. 97-98.

²⁶Johnson, op. cit., p. 244.

The Romans also had dice (tessare) which were made of ivory, stone or close-grained wood, and each side was marked with dots from one to six.²⁷ Tali and tessare were thrown on to a gaming table by hand or from a cup (see Fig. 164). The cup was a guarantee of fair play, for according to Martial²⁸ throwing dice with the hand encouraged cheating.

Of the multifarious ways of playing with dice known to the Romans the most popular game involved the use of three tali. In this game the side of the dice that came up was counted, and the aim of the player was to throw a higher number than his opponent.²⁹ The top throw, called Venus by Cicero,³⁰ was when the dice showed three seniones, or eighteen spots.³¹ In one variation of this game, if each dice showed a different surface, this was considered the winning throw.³²

Dice were also thrown to determine moves in certain games played with boards, which were marked out in squares and which used counters of bone, glass or crystal. One such game was duodecem scripta, which was similar to backgammon, and was played with counters upon a board divided into twenty-four places, or squares. The best description of this game can be found in Balsdon³³, who points out, that the twenty-four squares were divided into

²⁷Johnson, op. cit., p. 244.

²⁸Martial, op. cit., xiv. 16.

²⁹Johnson, op. cit., p. 245.

³⁰Cicero, de Div. op.cit., i.xxii.2.

³¹Lanciani, op. cit., p. 99.

³²Balsdon, loc. cit.,

³³Ibid. p. 156.

two rows, marked successively one to twelve in the first row, and then backwards from thirteen to twenty-four in the second. Each player had fifteen pieces, and moves were determined by the throwing of three tessare. At the start of the game one player's pieces were on square twenty-four and moved backwards. The winner was the player who first succeeded in moving all his pieces through the board.³⁴

There was also games of skill, which involved the moving of pieces (calculi) according to certain rules, upon a type of chess-board called abacus or tabula lusoria. Classical writers frequently refer to such games, but seldom give enough information to enable us to reconstruct the rules at all precisely.³⁵ The only important Roman game involving skill in which dice were never mentioned was that of latrunculi (soldier-game)³⁶. Varro³⁷ implies that the game was played on a board marked with lines and spaces, and according to Ovid³⁸ opponents played with pieces of glass which were of different colours and sometimes with jewels and precious stones. Ovid³⁹ explains that a piece was taken by being surrounded by two enemies in rank and file, and that backward moves were allowed. A blocking manoeuvre was also employed, but according to Seneca⁴⁰ a man so blocked could be extricated by a skilful player. Victory eventually belonged to the player who succeeded in capturing or immobilizing all or most of the opponent's pieces. The winner was hailed imperator - another indication of the military nature of the game.⁴¹ A number of stone 'boards'

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Paoli, op. cit., p. 236.

³⁶Austin, R.G., "Roman Board Games", Greece and Rome, Vol. iv., (Nov., 1934), p. 25.

³⁷cited in Austin, Ibid.

³⁸Ovid, op. cit., ii.208. cited in Austin, ibid.

³⁹Ibid. iii.358.

⁴⁰Seneca, op. cit., cxvii.30.

⁴¹Paoli, op. cit., p. 157.

have been found in Roman sites in Britian, with squared markings generally showing eight-by-eight squares, although the measurements vary. Their frequency suggests a popular game, probably *latrunculi*, for experiments have shown that only a board of this shape and size will make such a game playable.⁴²

The social games while not physically demanding, were among the more popular activities enjoyed by the Roman adults. They were especially enjoyed after a meal or after the more vigorous activities of the baths.

⁴²Austin, op. cit., p. 26.

Figure 149:



Figure 150:



Figures 149 and 150: Statues of Roman children with pets. The boy is shown with a pet lamb and the girl with a pet dove.

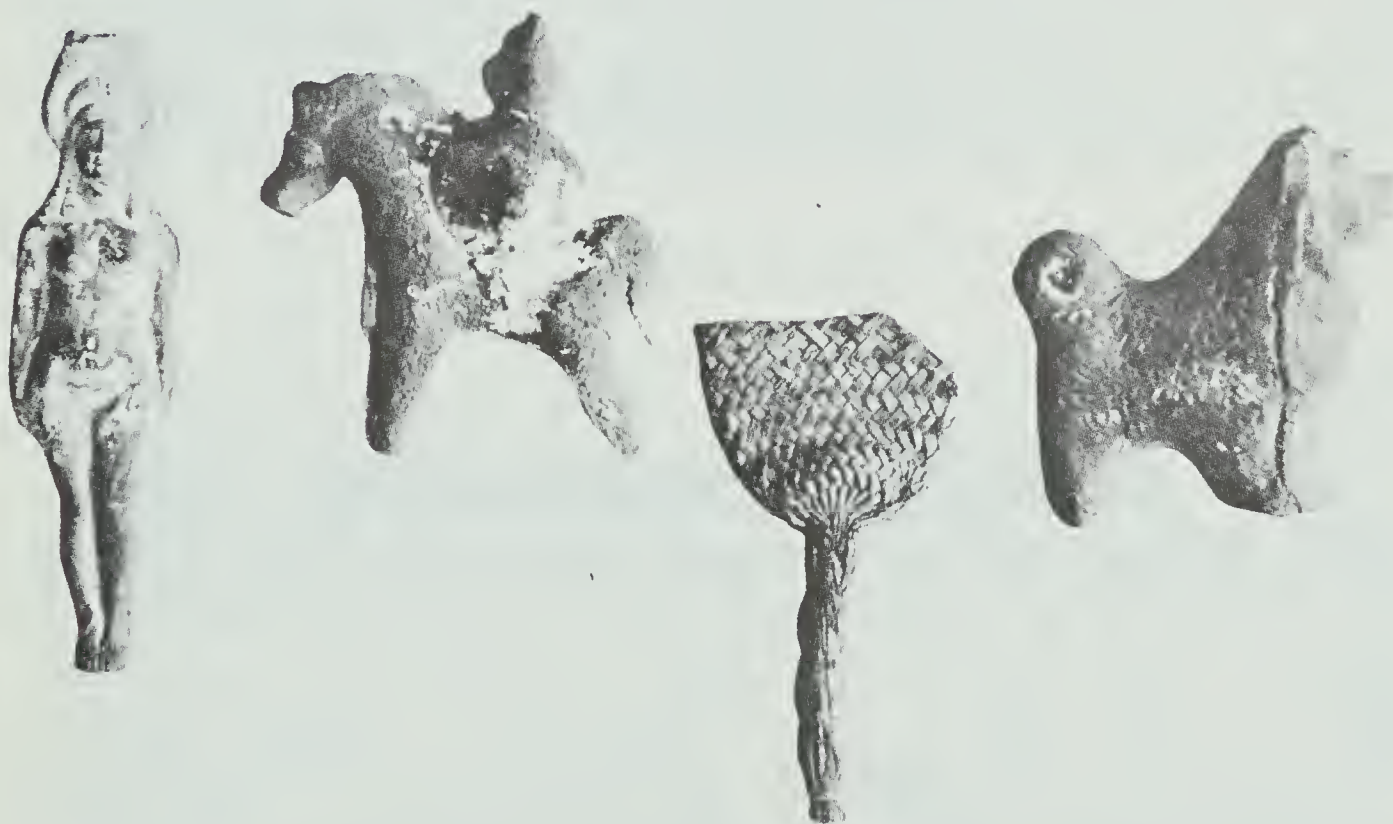


Figure 151: Children's terra-cotta toys. A doll, horseman, woven rush fan and a dog.



Figure 152: Relief from a sarcophagus showing a child with a scooter.



Figure 153: Relief from a sarcophagus depicting children's games. Two nut games are represented, together with a variation of the Greek 'jar' game.



Figure 154: Sarcophagus relief showing boys and girls playing with nuts.

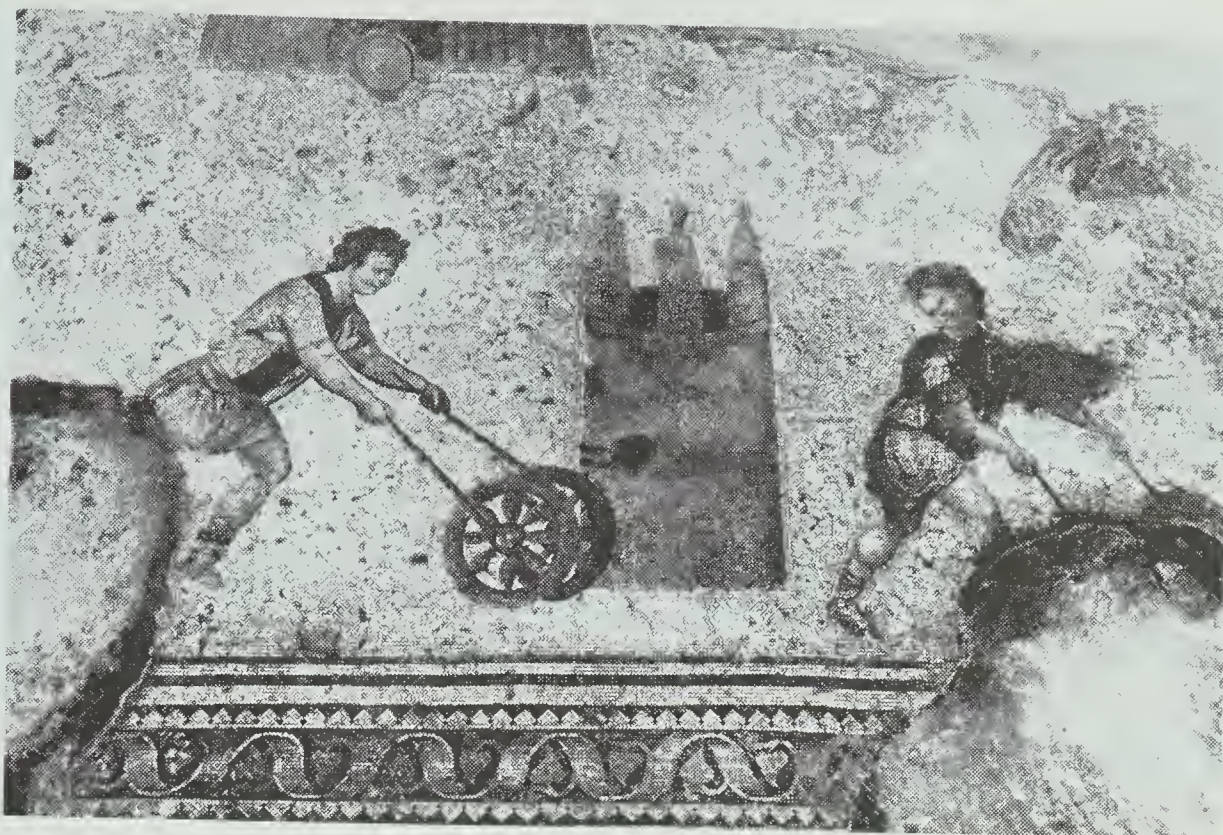


Figure 155: Mosaic from Istanbul showing boys racing with hoops.



Figure 156: Sarcophagus relief showing winged cupids playing with hoops. The four children on the right appear to be playing some form of 'cock-fighting'.



Figure 157: A fresco from Herculaneum showing winged playing children's games.



Figure 158: Illustration of a Pompeian wall painting showing children playing a variation of the Greek 'jar' game.



Figure 159: Illustration of a wall painting from Herculaneum, showing winged cupids playing 'hide and seek'.



Figure 160: Fourth century mosaic from Piazza Armerina, Sicily, showing children spearing a rabbit. The object above the rabbit may be an illustration of a kite.



Figure 161: The ceremony of victory is celebrated in this fourth century mosaic showing a child in a toy chariot. Another child offers a victor's palm.



Figure 163: Terra-cotta figures of women playing with knuckle-bones.

Figure 164:



Figure 165:



Figure 164: Wall painting from Pompeii showing two men playing a board-game.

Figure 165: First century wall painting from Herculaneum showing women playing with knuckle-bones.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the archeological evidence relating to physical activities in ancient Rome. Using this information to support the literary record, a further aim was to determine the role that physical activities served in the lives of the Roman people.

Archeological sources relating to physical activities were numerous and were used in the majority of cases to illustrate and amplify the literary record. In some instances, the archeological evidence was able to provide an insight into activities and techniques seldom recorded by the ancient writers. In some cases, archeological data provided information that was contrary to the literary accounts. Such was the case with the agones, where archeological and inscriptional material indicated that Greek athletic activities were not as unpopular in ancient Rome as most literary authorities would have us suppose. Thus, histories that were written on the basis of literary evidence alone may need to be revised in the light of a constantly increasing body of archeological knowledge.

Two hypotheses were examined in this study. These were as follows:

1. That public amusements provided by the imperial government were used as a political tool to direct the activities of the populace and to divert the minds of the subjects from political affairs.
2. That physical activities held a relevant position in the lives

of Roman citizens, both rich and poor.

In support of the first hypothesis the study revealed that through the provision of public spectacles, the imperial government was able to occupy and discipline the leisure hours of Rome's idle thousands. During the early years of the Republic such games were merely extensions of religious festivals held in honour of the gods. By the late Republic, however, public spectacles had become the best means of pursuing public favour and, under the Empire, of keeping the populace contented.

The political significance of sponsoring and attending public amusements was witnessed by the attitudes and activities of the Emperors. Tiberius, for example, who disliked these diversions, was often present at the games, partly to do the entertainers honour but, more important, to keep the populace in order by demonstrating his sympathy with their pleasure. Further, in spite of the fact that these entertainments were extraordinarily common, as early as the reign of Augustus private sponsors were allowed to give games only twice a year, and even then with a restricted program of events.

During the Empire, the public spectacles had also supplied, to a large extent, the place that public assemblies had held under the Republic. Cicero¹ said in 56 B.C. 'there are three places where popular feelings find expression, at public meetings, at public assemblies and at games and fights'. With the establishment of the Empire the public meetings and public assemblies were abolished, while the games and gladiatorial fights remained under imperial

monopoly. Finally, in a period of such political sterility, the division of popular passion into four factions in the Circus was useful to the government, and was encouraged by the Emperors.

If the spectacles were a political necessity, they served a far more important role as the amusement of an idle population. The popularity of these amusements was indicated by the increasing number of days on which they were given. In the last century of the Republic, such public holidays had taken place on fifty-ninedays a year; they had doubled in number by the second century A.D., and in the third century occupied one hundred and seventy-five days. In addition, there were the extraordinary games that occurred very frequently, and which sometimes prolonged an inordinate length of time. While those amusements were provided by the government as a political diversion, the increase in the number of days in which they were given was clearly in response to public demand.

Undoubtedly the Roman's desire for public exhibitions and gladiatorial combats, of which an extensive literary and archeological record has been preserved, has tended to observe the less conspicuous evidence of individual delight in more informal activities. The study revealed the Roman's interest in all forms of physical activity, whether it be hunting, swimming, fishing, ball games or simply playing *latrunculi* after exercise and a bath. Indeed, with the establishment of the imperial *thermae*, games and physical exercise formed part of the daily agenda. This evidence supports the second hypothesis, that physical activities held a relevant position in the lives of Roman citizens, both rich and poor.

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APPENDIX

ILLUSTRATIONS

DETAILS AND SOURCES

FIGURE

- 1 Sixteenth-century illustration of activities in the Circus.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., p. 301.
- 2 Air photograph of Circus Maxentius.
Source: Krause, op. cit., p. 66.
- 3 Relief currently in Museo Civico, Foligno, Italy.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 12.
- 4 Fourth-century sarcophagus relief. Rome, Vatican Museum.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., p. 242.
- 5 First-century fictile Roman lamp. British Museum, London.
Source: Walters, op. cit., p. xv.
- 6 Plan of Circus of Maxentius.
Source: Peck, op. cit.
- 7 Mosaic from Museo Arqueologico, Barcelona, Spain.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 271.
- 8 Third-century circus mosaic. Musee de la Civilisation Gallo-Romaine, Lyons, France.
Source: Ibid, p. 415.
- 9 Roman coin 210-213, British Museum, London.
Source: Mattingly & Sydenham, op. cit., vol. iv, p. xv.
- 10 Third-century Roman coin. British Museum, London.
Source: Ibid, p. ix.
- 11 Terra-cotta plaque. British Museum, London.
Source: British Museum Guide, op. cit., p. 70.
- 12 Sarcophagus relief. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 273.
- 13,14 Sarcophagii reliefs. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Ibid, p. 268.

FIGURE

- 15 Roman coin 202-210 A.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Mattingly and Sydenham, op. cit., vol. iv., p. vii.
- 16 Terra-cotta relief from Campagna. First-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Rome.
Source: Hadas, op. cit., p. 45.
- 17 Ornamental racing chariot. Capitoline Museum., Rome.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 278.
- 18 Mosaic showing faction of circus. Terme Museum, Naples.
Source: Ibid, p. 277.
- 19 Statue of magistrate. Fourth-century A.D. Conservatori Alihari.
Source: Ibid, p. 37.
- 20 Statue of victorious charioteer. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Ibid, p. 269.
- 21 Ivory statuette of charioteer. British Museum, London.
Source: British Museum Guide, op. cit., p. 63.
- 22 Sarcophagus relief of chariot race. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 269.
- 23 Roman lamp illustrating victory. First-century A.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Walters, op. cit., p. xxiii.
- 24 Mosaic from Roman villa near Trier, Germany. Trier Museum.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 171.
- 25 Pompeian wall painting of amphitheatre. Naples Museum, Naples.
Source: Grimal, op. cit., Fig. 154.
- 26 Interior view of amphitheatre, Pompeii.
Source: Grant, Gladiators, op. cit.
- 27 Interior view of Colosseum.
Source: Krause, op. cit., p. 69.
- 28 Exterior view of Colosseum.
Source: Ibid, p. 68.
- 29,30 Bronze coins, first century A.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Grant, op. cit., p. 46.
- 31 Roman coin, 235-244 A.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Mattingly and Sydenham, op. cit., vol. iv. pl. xx.



FIGURE

- 32 Interior view of Roman amphitheatre at Nimes.
Source: Grant, op. cit., p. 48.
- 33 Interior view of Roman amphitheatre at Arles.
Source: Ibid.
- 34 View of gladiatorial barracks, Pompeii.
Source: Ibid.
- 35 Bronze greave first-century, A.D. Museo Nazionale, Naples.
Source: Ibid., p. 43.
- 36 Gladiatorial dress helmet, first-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Naples.
Source: Ibid., p. 41.
- 37,38 Bronze gladiatorial helmets, first-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Naples.
Source: Ibid., p. 43.
- 39,40 Graffiti illustrating gladiatorial combats, Pompeii.
Source: Ibid., p. 46.
- 41 Bronze retiarius found at Esbarres, now in Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.
Source: Grimal, op. cit., Fig. 156.
- 42 Bronze statuettes of gladiators. British Museum, London.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 283.
- 43,44 Statuettes of gladiators. Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.
Source: Grant, op. cit., p. 19,22.
- 45,46 Terra-cotta statuettes of gladiators. Museo Nazionale, Naples,
Source: Ibid., p. 19, 23.
- 47 Statuette of Samnite. British Museum, London.
Source: Ibid.
- 48,49 Gladiatorial reliefs.
Source: Ibid. p. 21.
- 50 Stele of a gladiator from Ephesus, now in Berlin Museum.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 287.
- 51 Massini Mosaic. Madrid.
Source: Ibid., p. 298.

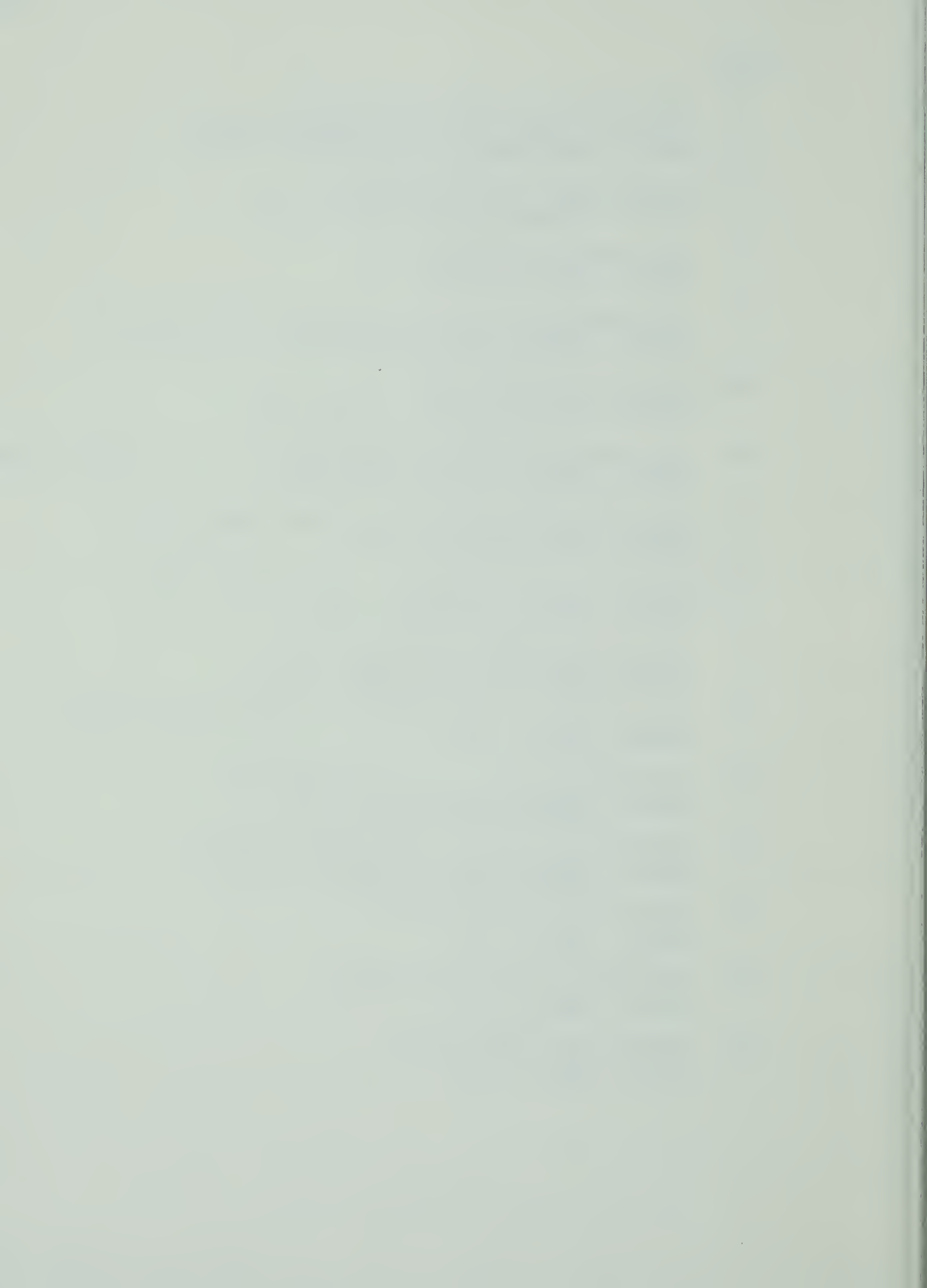


FIGURE

- 52 Colchester Vase. Colchester, England.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 299.
- 53,54 Mosaic of the Dar Buc Ammerà from Zilten, 2nd century A.D.,
Museo des Antiquities de Tripoli, Lybia.
Source: Hadas, p. 50,51.
- 55 Mosaic from Rauricorum Museum, Augusta.
Source: Grant, op. cit., p. 72.
- 56 Sarcophagus relief. Museo Nazionale, Chieti.
Source: Jones, op. cit., pl. Lviii.
- 57 Relief of myrmillo, first-century A.D. Museo die Samnio,
Benvento.
Source: Grant, op. cit., p. 23.
- 58 Drawing from tomb of Scaurus, Pompeii.
Source: Schrieber, op. cit., pl. xxix.
- 59,60 Gladiatorial reliefs.
Source: Grant, op. cit.
- 61,62 Roman terra-cotta lamps, first-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Rome.
Source: Ibid. p. 111.
- 63 Gladiatorial relief. Museo Nuovo Capitolino, Rome.
Source: Ibid., p. 113
- 64 Funeral stele of gladiator. Museo d'Arte Antica, Milan.
Source: Ibid.
- 65 Relief showing beast-fights.
Source: Paoli, op. cit., p. 225.
- 66 Third-century relief. Museo Torlonia, Rome.
Source: Grant, p. 106. op. cit.
- 67,68 Pompeian Graffiti depicting beast-fights.
Source: Ibid. p. 107.
- 69 Wall painting of animal fight from Lepcis Magna.
Source: Balsdon, op. cit., pl. 14.
- 70 Mosaic showing beast-fights.
Source: Grant, p. 111.
- 71 Third-century coin.
Source: Franke, op. cit., Fig. 265.
- 72 Roman coin. British Museum, London.
Source: Mattingly and Sydenham, op. cit., pl. vii.

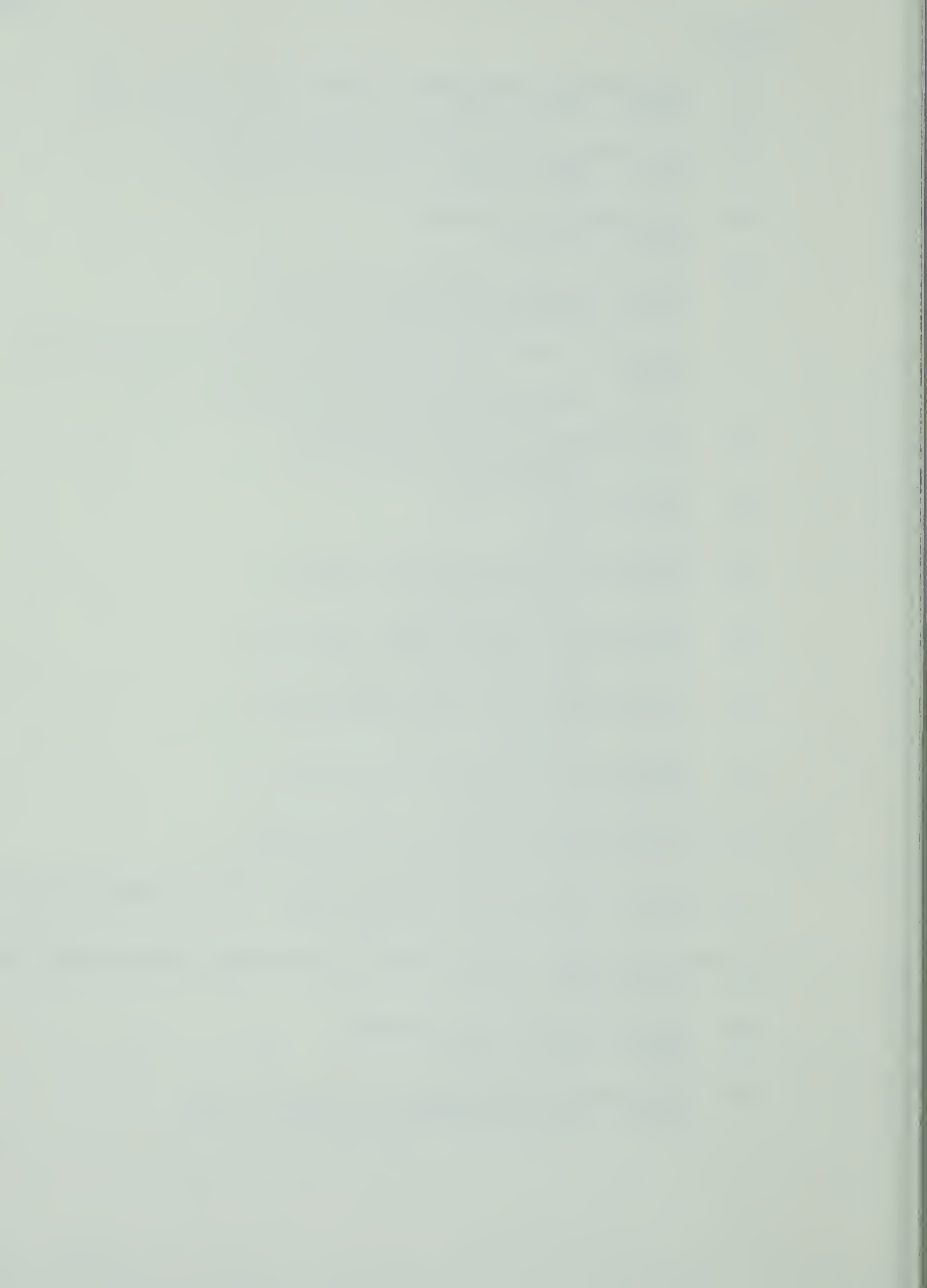
FIGURE

- 73 Roman coin from 72 B.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Sydenham, op. cit., pl.22.
- 74,75 Third-century coins of wrestlers.
Source: Franke, op. cit., Fig. 259, 260.
- 76 Coin from reign of Gordian III.
Source: Ibid, Fig. 257.
- 77 Illustration of a mosaic from Tusculum. Late Roman work.
Source: Gardiner, op. cit., Fig. 70.
- 78,79 Third-century Roman coins.
Source: Franke, op. cit., Fig. 261, 258.
- 80 Bronze statue of a boxer, first-century B.C. Terme Museum, Rome.
Source: Gardiner, op. cit., Fig. 72.
- 81 Statue from first-century A.D. Naples, Museo Nazionale.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit.
- 82,83 Boxers from Caracalla mosaic. Lateran Museum, Rome.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 243.
- 84 Bronze representation of Roman caestus.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., pl. 117.
- 85 Mosaic of boxer, first-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Naples.
Source: Ibid, pl. 119.
- 86 First-century relief. Lateran Museum, Rome.
Source: Gardiner, op. cit., Fig. 179.
- 87 Second-century relief. Museo Nazionale, Ancora.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., pl. 123.
- 88 Second-century boxing mosaic.
Source: Ibid, pl. 125.
- 89 First-century terra-cotta relief.
Source: Ibid, pl. 327.
- 90 Second century Roman relief.
Source: Ibid, pl. 104.



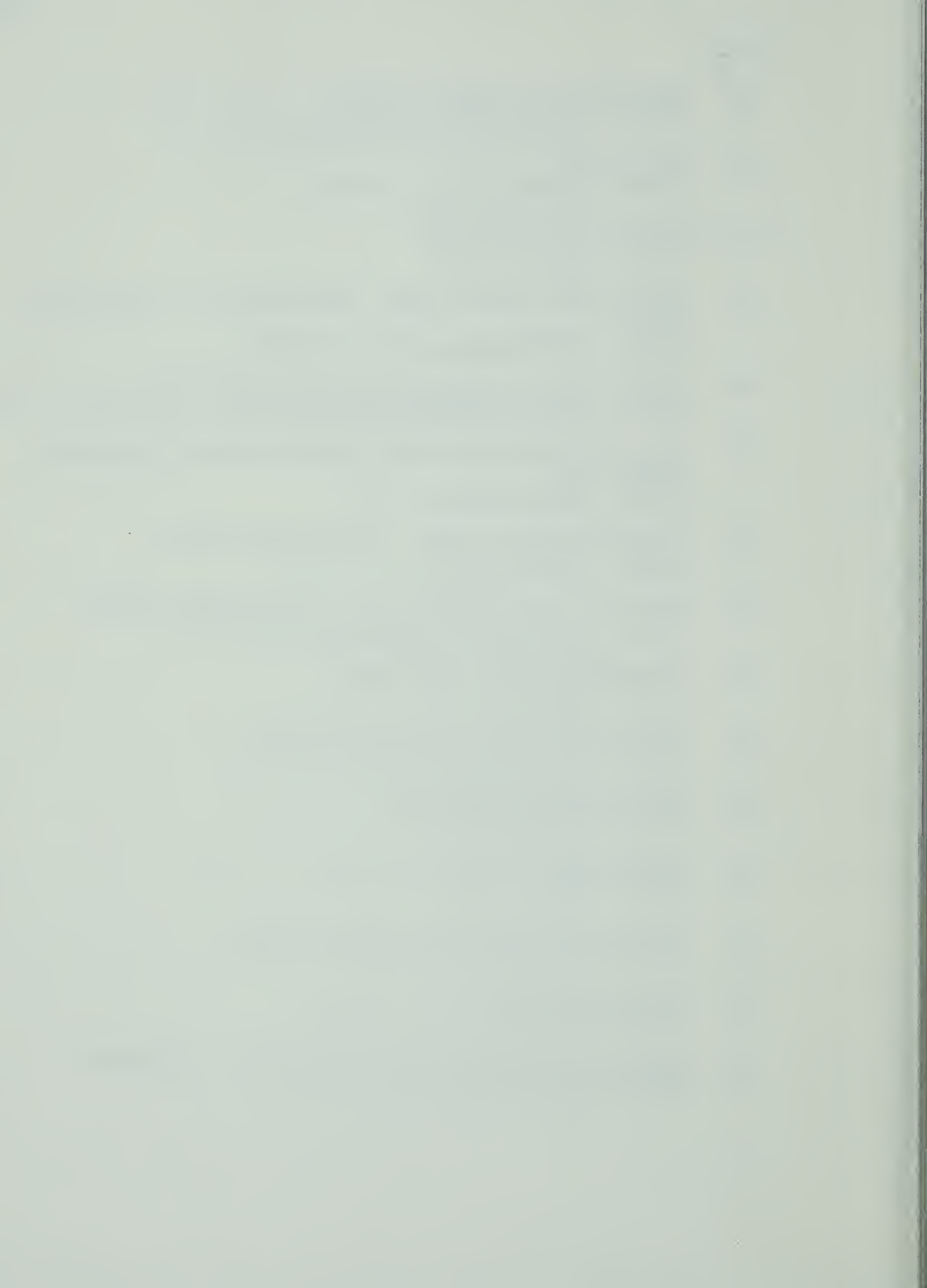
FIGURE

- 91 Second century sarcophagus relief. Lateran Museum, Rome.
Source: Ibid, pl. 101.
- 92 Wrestling mosaic from Pompeii, first-century A.D.
Source: Ibid, pl. 99.
- 93 Wall painting from Pompeii.
Source: pl. 100.
- 94 Caracalla mosaic. Lateran Museum, Rome.
Source: Johnston, loc. cit., p. 243.
- 95 Roman coin from reign of Commodus. 186-192 A.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Mattingly and Sydenham, op. cit., pl. Lii.
- 96 Air photograph of Baths of Caracalla.
Source: Hanfmann, op. cit., p. 153.
- 97 Reconstruction of Baths.
Source: Ibid.
- 98 Apodyterium of Stabian Baths, Pompeii.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 247.
- 99 Apodyterium of women's baths, Herculaneum.
Source: Paoli, op. cit., Fig. 49.
- 100 Frigidarium of the Stabian Baths, Pompeii.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 243.
- 101 Caldarium of men's baths, Herculaneum.
Source: Paoli, op. cit., Fig. 50.
- 102,103,104 Illustrations of 'smaller' Baths, Pompeii.
Source: Schrieber, op. cit., p. 113.
- 105,106 'Bikini Girls' mosaic. Piazza Armerina, Sicily, fourth-century A.D.
Source: Hanfmann, op. cit., pl. xxv.
- 107,108 Ground Plans. Hadrian's Baths, Lepcis Magna. Stabian Baths, Pompeii.
Source: Ibid, p. 151.
- 109 Ground Plan, Baths of Caracalla.
Source: Ibid, p. 152.
- 110 Illustration of ball-game.
Source: Rice and Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 48.



FIGURE

- 111 Illustration from Baths of Titus.
Source: Daremburg and Saglio, op. cit., iv. 477.
- 112 Ivory relief.
Source: Aymard, op. cit., pl. iii.
- 113,114 Hunting reliefs with dogs.
Source: Ibid, pl. xxv.
- 115 Hunting mosaic from El Djem, third-century A.D. Musee Bardo, Tunis.
Source: Hanfmann, op. cit., pl. xxxviii.
- 116 Hunting scene on Roman glass, fourth-century A.D.
Source: Journal of Roman Studies, op. cit., xlvii(1957) pl. xiv.
- 117 Statue of hunter with rabbit, second-century A.D. Capitoline Museum, Rome.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, pl. 181.
- 118 Sculpture of dog and deer. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Pijoan, op. cit., iv. p. 353.
- 119 Roman coin, first-century, A.D. British Museum, London.
Source: Mattingly and Sydenham, op. cit., pl. 1.
- 120 Sarcophagus relief of deer hunt.
Source: Aymard, op. cit., pl. xxi.
- 121 Mosaic of deer hunt, third-century A.D.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., pl. 176.
- 122 Mosaic depicting boar hunt.
Source: Aymard, op. cit., pl. v.
- 123 Hunting mosaic, third century A.D.
Source: Ibid, pl. xix.
- 124 Sarcophagus relief, third-century, A.D.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., pl. 175.
- 125 Sarcophagus relief.
Source: Aymard, op. cit., pl. xiv.
- 126 Medallions on the north side of the Arch of Constantine.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 31.



FIGURE

- 127 Mosaic from Piazza Armerina, Sicily. 300-330 A.D.
Source: Hanfmann, op. cit., pl. xxiv.
- 128 Hunting mosaic, fourth-century A.D.
Source: Aymard, op. cit., pl. xxxii.
- 129 Mosaic of lion hunt from building in Lepcis Magna.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 397.
- 130,131 Drawings depicting lion hunts.
Source: Aymard, op. cit., pl. xxvii, pl. xxxi.
- 132 Sarcophagus relief illustrating hunt for lion.
Source: Ibid, pl. xxviii.
- 133 Hunt mosaic, third century A.D. Musee Archeologique d'Hippone, Algeria.
Source: Ibid, pl. iv.
- 134 Fishing mosaic, third-century, A.D. Museo Disenzano.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., pl. 177.
- 135 Fishing mosaic, third-century A.D. Louvre Museum.
Source: Grimal, op. cit., Fig. 62.
- 136,137 Oil lamps depicting fishing, first-century A.D., British Museum, London.
Source: Walters, op. cit., pl. xvi., xxiii.
- 138 Illustration of Pompeian wall painting.
Source: Schrieber, op. cit., pl. lxiv.
- 139 Fishing mosaic, third-century A.D. Louvre Museum.
Source: Grimal, loc. cit., Fig. 62.
- 140 Pompeian wall painting. Naples Museum.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 305.
- 141 Fishing mosaic from Lepcis Magna, second-century A.D. Archaeological Museum, Lybia.
Source: Hanfmann, op. cit., pl. xxxvii.
- 142 Sarcophagus relief from Ostia, second-century, A.D. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.
Source: AJA, 66, (1962). pl. 77.

FIGURE

- 143 Sarcophagus front. Formerly Rome, Palazzo Vaccari.
Source: Ibid,
- 144 Sarcophagus relief. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Ibid.
- 145 Boating fresco, second-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Rome.
Source: Sport Ed Arte, op. cit., pl. 67.
- 146 Sarcophagus relief. Lateran Museum, Rome.
Source: AJA, 66, loc. cit.
- 147 Boating mosaic, third-century, A.D. Louvre Museum.
Source: Grimal, loc. cit., Fig. 62.
- 148 Roman lamp. British Museum, London.
Source: Walters, op. cit., pl. 30.
- 149 Boy with lamb. Conservatori.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 144.
- 150 Girl with dove. Capitoline Museum, Rome.
Source: Ibid.
- 151 Terra-cotta toys. Toronto Museum.
Source: Ibid, p. 144.
- 152 Sarcophagus relief. Museo Kircheriano, Rome.
Source: Ibid, p. 309.
- 153 Sarcophagus relief,
Source: Showerman, op. cit., p. 373.
- 154 Sarcophagus relief, children's game. Vatican Museum, Rome.
Source: Johnston, op. cit., p. 143.
- 155 Mosaic from Istanbul, Mosaic Museum.
Source: Balsdon, p. 191.
- 156 Sarcophagus relief- children's games.
Source: Paoli, op. cit., Fig. 51.
- 157 Fresco from Herculaneum.
Source: Ibid, Fig. 52.
- 158 Illustration of Pompeian wall-painting.
Source: Schrieber, op. cit., pl. lxxix.

FIGURE

- 159 Wall painting, Herculaneum.
Source: Ibid.
- 160,161 Children's mosaics from Piazza Armerina, Sicily.
Source: Hadas, op. cit., p. 52-53.
- 163 Terra-cotta figures, second-century B.C. British Museum, London.
Source: Hill, op. cit., p. 329.
- 164 Wall painting from Pompeii.
Source: Pijoan, op. cit., pl. xxi.
- 165 Wall painting from Herculaneum, first-century A.D. Museo Nazionale, Naples.
Source: Hadas, p. 133.

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